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ARTISTIC IDEALS¹ III. WORKMANSHIP

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"All things are doubly fair
If patience fashion them
And care—
Verse, enamel, marble, gem.

No idle chains endure:
Yet, Muse, to walk aright,
Lace tight
Thy buskin proud and sure.

Chisel and carve and file
Till thy vague dream imprint
Its smile
On the unyielding flint."

—Gautier on "Art": translation by *Santayana*.

I

THAT is no doubt only half of the truth which is expressed in the oft-repeated saying that genius is an infinite capacity for taking pains; but it is the half that is most vital to those of us who wish to be artists. For though we have no control over the degree of our native talent, we can to some extent determine what we shall make of it; and while no amount of talent will avail us much without painstaking development, few talents are too small to be of service if cultivated in the spirit of workmanship. It was that spirit that inspired Brahms's memorable counsel to a young composer regarding his songs: "Whether they are beautiful

¹These papers on "Artistic Ideals" the author has based on excerpts from his reading which he has found inspiring, in the hope of thus sharing their stimulus with other artists.

also is not your affair—but *perfect they must be.*” It was that spirit that prompted Meredith to write to a young fellow-artist: “If hard study should kill your creative effort, it will be no loss to the world or to you. And if, on the contrary, the genius you possess should survive the process of mental labor, it will be enriched and worthy of a good rank.” It was that spirit that made at once so touching and so thrilling these words of Epictetus: “What then, since I am naturally dull, shall I, for this reason, take no pains? I hope not. . . . For I shall never be a Milo, and yet I do not neglect my body; nor shall I be a Cræsus, and yet I do not neglect my property; nor, in a word, do we neglect looking after anything because we despair of reaching the highest degree.”

Unfortunately such a spirit is rare in our country, where the prevailing type of youth is alert and facile, but impatient, indiscriminating, and too easily satisfied. We see about us each year a fair array of promising young men, but also, alas, the promising young men of last year, now declining into middle-aged mediocrity. What they lack is not talent, but character. They have plenty of ability, but no staying power; they use no severity with themselves; they have not cultivated the ideal of workmanship. And so, whatever their native gifts, as artists they fail.

On the other hand it is unmistakable that the great art of the world has been made by those men, and by those men only, who knew how, in Emerson’s phrase, to “toil terribly.” Surely, the bold generalization of Huneker is true: “All art is the arduous victory of great minds over great imaginations.” And the greater the imaginations, we may add, the more arduous seems to be the victory. “Shakespeare, like other poets,” writes Masfield, “grew by continual, very difficult mental labor, by the deliberate and prolonged exertion of every mental weapon, and by the resolve to do not ‘the nearest thing,’ precious to human sheep, but the difficult, new and noble thing, glimmering beyond his mind, and brought to glow there by toil.” This does not agree very well with the stock sentimentalist notion of “inspiration” as a sort of demoniac possession, and of the inspired artist as a kind of dishevelled-haired, rolling-eyed, irresponsible madman; but it is nearer the truth. “The raptures of creative activity,” exclaims Leo Shestov,¹—“empty words invented by men who never had an opportunity of judging from their own experience. . . . Usually the creator feels only vexations. Every creation is created out of the Void. At the best, the maker finds himself confronted with a formless, meaningless, usually obstinate and stiff matter, which

¹In the *Freeman*, April 7, 1920.

yields reluctantly to form. . . . Creative activity is a continual progression from failure to failure, and the condition of the creator is usually one of uncertainty, mistrust, and shattered nerves. For this reason even men of genius cannot keep up the creative activity to the last. As soon as they have acquired their technique, they begin to repeat themselves, well aware that the public willingly endures the monotony of a favorite, even finds virtue in it. . . . He who has once been through the creative rapture is not easily tempted to try again."

Endless effort is thus always concealed under the apparent ease that so delights us in all first-rate art: this is the paradox of workmanship. If, as has been said, "Easy writing makes hard reading," and if indeed "A labored style is one on which insufficient labor has been expended," is not that because, as Whistler was entitled by long experience to tell us, "Work alone will efface the footsteps of work"? There is a French proverb "Time will not spare that on which time has been spared," and Thoreau's counsel to young writers is: "If you foresee that a part of your essay will topple down after the lapse of time, throw it down now yourself." Always and everywhere, agonizing toil is the price of delicious spontaneity. To Chopin, for instance, that almost ideal figure of grace and charm, the process of composition was, in the expressive phrase of George Sand, "a minute and desperate perseverance." In the interminable search for what would satisfy his exacting taste he would write a single passage a hundred times, pacing the room, biting his pen, tearing up whole sheets and beginning afresh, reduced sometimes to tears. . . . Some of Beethoven's friends found him locked into his study one hot August afternoon, singing, shouting, raving like a madman. He had been working all day on his great Mass, forgetting even to eat. Presently he appeared, wild-eyed, faint with hunger and exhaustion, dazed with the intensity of his mental struggle, able to return but gradually to ordinary life. "No one can realize who has not watched Whistler paint," records his biographer, "the agony his work gave him. I have seen him, after a day's struggle with a picture, when things did not go, completely collapse, as from an illness."¹

II

The arduousness of all high artistry is thus one of its essential qualities; it is as if friction generated heat, and power could

¹"Life of James McNeill Whistler," by Joseph and Elizabeth Robbins Pennell, sixth one-volume edition, page 323.

develop only through resistance. This is a matter of common observation in the daily effort to start work. As Dr. Vaughan Williams likes to tell his pupils, beginning to compose is like trying to write with a fountain-pen that will not flow: "Don't put it away, but keep on scratching, and after a while it will write." "You have to get your ideas started," he says, "just as one cranks a cold automobile. Once they are started they will create their own interest." One must first "get warmed up," as we say, and then, to use a happy phrase of Mr. John Jay Chapman's "the significance will begin to steam out of the materials." "What is the relation," asks Mr. Chapman in a striking analysis of workmanship,¹ "between the long years of drudgery that must be gone through and the ultimate heaven of creative work? This question cannot be answered simply. Great diligence in technical matters has some relation to remote spiritual interests; and a passion for exactitude in the drawing of an apple will issue in some sort of force in the painting of a crucifixion. It always seems as if the talented child were already in charge of a spirit which we could not see, who whispered to him that this digging must be done for the treasure. It seems to be unquestionable that those remotest and most happy touches of genius which one would say no study could come at, no experience suggest, are the very ones which are due to a knowledge of the craft, to long experience and private endeavor. The handling of difficulties seems to be the road to facilities. Something crudely and honestly analysed cracks the shell of the mystery; and an impersonal artistic treatment becomes the vehicle of the most personal kind of expression. Thus the limitations—namely, those very conditions which constitute technique—give rise through compression to the soul of the work."

Mr. Chapman's figure of the child digging for treasure suggests happily the element of exploration and discovery, of exciting adventure, that the artist, that child of a larger growth, always finds in technical study. So keenly bent is he upon the treasure that he delights in the digging. For him the artistic process has in itself, independent of its results, an immense zest; working at it is as exciting to him as playing is to other people; indeed, for him work *is* play.

With what gusto, for example, did Stevenson, according to his own often quoted account, "play the sedulous ape" to his great models, and what long-drawn satisfactions we read between the lines of this less familiar passage from one of his letters: "I believe in the covering of much paper, each time with a definite and not

¹John Jay Chapman: "Memories and Milestones," essay on "The Teaching of Art."

too difficult artistic purpose; and then, from time to time, drawing oneself up and trying, in a superior effort, to combine the faculties thus acquired or improved. Thus one progresses." Or consider this memorandum from the Note-book of Samuel Butler, an artist who approaches technique in a dryer, more ironic temper, but evidently with an equal feeling for its fascination. "In art, never try to find out anything, or try to learn anything until the not knowing it has come to be a nuisance to you for some time. Then you will remember it, but not otherwise. . . . Do the things that you can see; they will show you those that you cannot see. By doing what you can, you will gradually get to know what it is that you want to do and cannot do, and so to be able to do it."

Technique, in short, is a personal adventure, and must be so conceived in order to be successfully pursued. This helps us to understand why the old conception of discipline as imposed by an outer authority is so contrary to human nature, and why the results of such "discipline" are always so negligible. Tasks dictated to us by others usually teach us nothing; it is only those we choose ourselves that afford us the conditions for developing the sense of workmanship—a freely chosen goal, willingly endured labor, risk, and uncertainty, and the possibility of the unique final triumph. External authority on the contrary is bound to arouse in us one or the other of two equally futile responses. Either we accept it in the spirit of servile obedience it invites, in which case we degenerate into academics and pedants; or else, reacting violently against it, we reject with it all discipline and become mere revolutionists and anarchists, another type of anti-artists just as sterile, in a different way, as the pedants. Fruitfulness, in short, develops in an artist only through discipline, but this discipline, in order to be real, has to be self-imposed. As Bertrand Russell says: "The desirable kind of discipline is the kind that comes from within, which consists in the power of pursuing a distant object steadily, foregoing and suffering many things on the way. This involves the subordination of impulse to will, the power of directing action by large creative desires even at moments when they are not vividly alive. Without this, no serious ambition, good or bad, can be realized, no consistent purpose can dominate."¹

The conception of workmanship as zestful adventure also helps us to understand one of the most characteristic traits of the good workman, his singular objectivity of attitude, his happy freedom from that sensitive self-consciousness which so often prevents less skilful people from using effectively even what skill they

¹Bertrand Russell, "Why Men Fight," p. 170.

possess. Your good workman owes his objectivity to the simple fact that what interests him is not himself, or what we may think of him, but the artistic process in which he exists only as a fascinated participator. Hence an unfailing index by which you can recognize him is his attitude toward criticism: he is so bent on the work itself, so eager to improve it, and to that end so keen to discover its defects, that for himself he simply has no thought left over. It is your bungler who is subject to wounded vanity, who will waste valuable energy "rationalizing" his failures (giving elaborate reasons for them, in order to salvage his self-esteem) who in extreme cases will try to make up, poor fellow, for his lack of ability by an inordinate opinion of himself. Thus after a little experience one comes to realize that conceit is almost invariably in inverse ratio to ability, and that the conceited young man is destined to remain always a nonentity. That is why he has to fall back on conceit. If furthermore he be naturally aggressive, he will probably become a great self-advertiser, but without being able to develop a self worth advertising.

Let us suppose, for the sake of illustration, that you tell a young composer that in a certain place his trombones, let us say, are written too high. If he belong to one painfully familiar type, he will ignore the comment, or dismiss it with a perfunctory explanation, quickly reverting to his main point—the striking merits of his work, and the suggestion that you should interest such and such a publisher in printing it, or such and such a conductor in performing it. This is the born mediocrity who, powerless to create work that will live and move of itself, tries to make it go by "push" or "pull."

A second type, rarer but not uncommon, is at first rather hurt that you are so little impressed by his plausibility, but quickly rallies his mind in all sorts of ingenious reasons for what he has done. He had in mind a certain conductor who likes brilliant brass parts. Are you aware that the French write their trombones high? The scene of his symphonic poem is in the mountains, and the rarefied air must be suggested in the instrumentation . . . and so on. His reasons are most instructive and diverting. If only he were a writer instead of a composer his art would be excellent, but music must sound. He will not remain a nonentity, however. He may even become well-known as a critic.

Your third young man is modest, interested, and obliged. He says little, except that he will think the matter over. When he leaves you he proceeds to learn all he can about the trombone. He studies scores, takes notes, talks with players. Slowly he comes to

his own conclusions. If he finds that the criticized passage can be improved, he does not begrudge the time and drudgery necessary to change it. In short, he is your genuine workman, and may become a good composer.

However that may be, history leaves us in no doubt that it was by such methods that the great composers of the past perfected themselves. "Bach's principle of study," observes Parry, "is illustrative of the manner in which all musical progress is made. He early adopted the practice of copying out the works of composers who excelled in all the different branches of art,—sometimes actually rewrote them, and wherever he recognized an artistic principle of undoubted value . . . absorbed and amalgamated it as part of his own procedure. And not only that, but he always sedulously criticised himself, and recast, remodelled, and rewrote everything which new experience or a happier mood made him feel capable of improving."¹ Schumann, in turn, regarded Bach's "Well-Tempered Clavichord" as his grammar, and said that he had dissected all of the fugues "down to their minutest parts," and that the advantage of this was great, "for Bach was a thorough man, and his works seem written for eternity." Brahms is said to have written a chorale figuration every day; a few of these are preserved in the posthumous "Eleven Choral Preludes," but most of them he regarded simply as exercises—musical chest-weights and dumbbells to keep him in prime condition.

"The athlete," says Mr. Edwin Muir, "by the discipline of his body, creates for himself a new world of actions; he can now do things which before were prohibited to him; in consequence, he has enlarged the sphere of his freedom. The thinker and the artist by discipline of a different sort are rewarded in the same way. They are now more free, because they have more capacity. There are people, however, who think one can be free whether one has the capacity for freedom or not—a characteristically modern fallacy. But a man the muscles of whose body and mind are weak cannot do *anything*; how can he be free? The concept of Freedom cannot be separated from that of Power." Stuart P. Sherman has explained that what Emerson really meant by his often misunderstood saying "Hitch your wagon to a star" was no mere vaguely edifying idealism, but the highly practical counsel, "Put yourself in connection with irresistible power. Go where the gods are going, take the direction of all good men and let them bear you along, strike into the current of the great human traditions,

¹"The Evolution of the Art of Music," page 171. Some more of this inspiring passage is quoted in *Independence*.

discover the law of your higher nature and act with it." Emerson himself defines power as a "sharing of the nature of the world," explaining that "its secret is to be able to bring to bear in your stroke the whole force of things, an obedience to law in order to use it." It is through workmanship, with its insatiable curiosity, its tireless self-forgetful investigation of reality, that this obedience to law in order to use it is achieved by all true artists. In the resulting sense of power they find their supreme happiness. Emerson speaks for them all when he joyfully confides to his journal:¹ "Success in your work, the finding of a better method, the better understanding that insures the better performing, is hat and coat, is food and wine, is fire and horse and health and holiday. At least, I find that any success in my work has the effect on my spirits of all these."

III

Workmanship seems characteristically to operate, not, as we might expect, by elaboration, but by elimination of the irrelevant and concentration of the essential. This need not surprise us if we remember that since the work of art is a selection out of the welter of our impressions, its characteristic excellence is a unity achieved only by miracles of inhibition. Thoreau advises the writer to return to his subject again and again until he is sure he has given a full account of what it means to him: "not that your essay need be long," he explains, "but that it will take a long time to make it short." We sympathize with Whitman's saying that he could resist anything better than his own diversity, and with Stevenson's that if he only knew what to omit he could make a classic out of the daily paper. "What is easier," asks Benedetto Croce in a suggestive criticism of "modernism," "than to have 'ideas?'—Alas, the difficulty is not to have 'ideas,' but to have *one idea* which dominates and reduces to their proper proportion all the others, and gives coherence and solidity to the work of thought or action. . . . Years ago I defined a false work of art as 'one that has many beauties,' as distinguished from the genuine work 'which has only one.'"

Among the supreme documents of workmanship are the sketch-books of Beethoven. In studying them we are struck by the minuteness and extent of the sketches for the initial statements of the themes, technically called the "expositions," as contrasted with the brevity of the notes for their development. It was not the elaboration of his ideas that troubled Beethoven; that took

¹Emerson: "Journals," X, 175.

care of itself; the difficulty was to present them clearly and powerfully in the first place, to remove from them all that was superfluous, and therefore injurious, while leaving everything essential. For the opening section of the *Eroica* Symphony there are five or six complete sketches and many studies of detail—the chips and marble dust, so to speak, from which Beethoven's chisel disengaged the perfect statue. As we read through them we see each theme contracting rather than expanding as Beethoven finds how to reduce it to its lowest terms. Like a hunter pursuing the game which by protective coloration eludes him in the underbrush, he has constantly to detach the themes from their backgrounds and give each its proper life. It is an exciting chase. "From the glow of enthusiasm"—so Beethoven describes it—"I let the melody escape. I pursue it. Breathless I catch up with it. It flies again, it disappears, it plunges into a chaos of diverse emotions. I catch it again, I seize it, I embrace it with delight. . . . I multiply it then by modulations, and at last I triumph in the first theme. There is the whole symphony."

Wherever there is need Beethoven takes equal pains with the developments or even the repetitions of his themes. Nothing with him is taken for granted, a matter of routine; all must be tested by its effect. There is a place, for example, in the *Waldstein* Sonata where we can trace his changes and their reasons in detail—a highly enlightening process. It is the point, technically called the "Recapitulation," where the theme, after having been presented in all sorts of guises, returns, by way of summary, in simplest form, as it was at first. Such a return should resemble the final summing up in an essay or the last insistence on the text in a sermon: it should give the impression of simplicity achieved through complexity, of plain statement after rich illustration. In this case, however, as sometimes happens, Beethoven finds that his effect is bald and obvious, instead of strong and firm, chiefly because of monotony in what we call tonality or key. He has stayed too close to the central tone of C round which the whole piece revolves, so that we have grown tired of it. How can he get away from C major for a moment, introduce a little variety, and so make C fresh to our ears once more? This problem he solves in the sketch-book by deflecting his tune so that it moves away from the central key for eleven measures, after which excursion we are glad to get back home again. So far so good; but the most Beethovenish part of the whole matter is that in the finished sonata we find not eleven measures of truancy, but only seven. Finding that he could get the whole value of his detour in hardly more than half the

space, seven measures instead of eleven, he has so improved upon his own improvement. How many artists would have loved beauty well enough to pursue her so far? "Details," said Michael Angelo, "make perfection—and perfection is no detail."

Another interesting document may be found in the two versions of Brahms's first piece of chamber-music, the Trio in B major, Opus 8, completely rewritten in maturity. The youthful version is exuberant, heaven-storming, turgid in style and sprawling in structure, and hence, despite great beauties, uncertain and disappointing in effect. The first theme is one of Brahms's greatest melodies, but it is like a noble river that presently loses itself in marshes. The second version is clarified, quieted, restrained, focussed. It gains sobriety, reticence, power held in reserve. It is like an athlete in training, all sinew, no longer, like the first, choked in its own fat.

Extravagance seems always to be as vulgar in art as it is in personal demeanor, and distinction of thought naturally allies itself with economy of means. The greatest composers in their greatest moments seem instinctively to simplify rather than elaborate their themes, as if they were in search of ultimate essences. There is a kind of variation which is a sort of distillation of the theme, a purification of it from all the fibrous matter and pulp that hides and dilutes the one clear drop of essential aromatic oil it contains. The most ineffable moments in Beethoven's later quartets are such as the *Adagio molto espressivo* in E major of the slow movement of Opus 127, where, stripping his theme, so beautiful even as first presented, of all its unessential ornament, he projects its silhouette or outline in the poignant simplicity of its beauty, like a soul hovering above its body. So different a composer as Strauss works in the same way when at the end of "Till Eulenspiegel," in which two themes have run the gamut, as it seems, of all possible manipulation and developments, they are at length reduced to their lowest terms and represented, in alternation, each by a little phrase of only three notes, which in their frailty, their unadorned naiveté, are more profoundly affecting than the greatest orchestral tumult could be. Such elimination of the inessential no doubt depends for its great effect on its enlisting the endless resources of our imaginations. "If you would be dull," said a French writer, "tell all." If you would be thrilling, we might add, tell little, and only what is essential, but in such a way as to suggest the illimitable.

It is characteristic of good workmanship, then, in whatever medium, that it proceeds by concentration. Giotto, to show

supreme skill, draws a plain circle; Phidias does not waste his planes, nor the Parthenon its severe lines; Flaubert distils a chapter into a paragraph, and Mr. Charlie Chaplin, an artist in the movies, makes ten reels into one. Stuart P. Sherman has collated parallel passages in the journals and the essays of Emerson. "One remarks at first sight with surprise," he reports, "that the superiority on the side of fluency and texture is frequently with the journals. The superiority of the essays is in condensation and intensity." And he quotes Emerson's own saying that "The inexorable rule in the Muses' court is: either inspiration or silence—" which "teaches the enormous force of a few words and in proportion to the inspiration checks loquacity."¹

IV

Loquacity, however, is a faculty not unpriized by journalists, especially, as Mark Twain pointed out, when they are paid by the word; and the prevalence among us of journalistic standards, with their characteristic commercialism, may help us to understand why workmanship is an ideal as difficult of achievement in America to-day as independence or spontaneity. We may generalize Emerson's contrast of inspiration and loquacity to a more sweeping one between quality and quantity, between the spirit of art, which, aiming at excellence, works through concentration and individualization, and the spirit of commerce which, aiming at profit, finds it in quantity production, "standardization," adulteration, and advertising. In a poignant little story bearing as title the single word "Quality," Galsworthy has portrayed an old shoemaker, a lover of honest workmanship, driven out of work and finally to starvation by the competition of the machine. He is a type of all artists starved, whether physically or spiritually, in machine-made societies where good workmanship has become economically suicidal. How many such potential artists have been lost to us by sheer starvation, literal or metaphorical, in the midst of our ironic American plenty, we shall never know. And of course the most subtle irony of the situation is that this starvation never stops with the artists themselves, but permeates the whole society their work ought to nourish, as we see in the harshness, ugliness, and emptiness of the life about us.

How grotesque is the so-called "art" of our day that is produced for the market alone—stereotyped, flavorless, machine-made, provided with interchangeable parts like a Ford! Consider

¹Stuart P. Sherman, "Americans," pp. 115 and 117.

the short story of commerce, the formulæ for which are taught in the correspondence schools, guaranteed to "sell the copy." Who can tell the short story of one favorite purveyor from that of another? And then there are the popular novels, those very unnovel commodities. Their authors must find writing books almost as monotonous as keeping them; some of them seem to regard the one activity as only a necessary preliminary to the other. A popular painter, reports a New York newspaper, "said that his pictures brought all the way from \$2500 to \$3000, and that he could turn out two a month. 'I know it isn't art,' he said, 'but I have two daughters to educate. We live in a large house, have two cars, are obliged to entertain, and I have to work like a dog to keep things up. I get nothing out of it myself.' " Note the typically commercial psychology of the last sentence. He seems to think that the fact that he "gets nothing out of it himself" somehow excuses his prostitution of art. Anyone who understood the place of spontaneity in art would feel that this was the most shameful confession of all. If he gets nothing out of it, how can he hope that anyone else will? The other day a writer of jazz, who makes a large income, confided his secret to an obliging public: "You must give people tunes that remind them of other tunes they like already." As with the musical "low-brows" so with the "high-brows": they, too, have their accepted progressions and stock cadences, a little more sophisticated but equally conventional; they too have their favorite flavors in instrumentation, in which snarling horns replace the blaring saxophones: the fashions are different, that is all. When the ultra-modern rubber-stamp was just coming into vogue in 1907, Charles Lecocq, who had grown old and wise in observing music in Paris, proposed to Saint-Saëns a "Coöperative Society of United Composers" to be "established on a vast scale in order to render more easy and rapid the confection of the lyric drama. Each wheel of this great machine would be confided to specialists—leading-motive-makers, developers, joiners, orchestrators, etc., and in this way, by division of labor, they would be able to produce perfect masterpieces in very little time." "Without doubt," concluded Lecocq, "all the composers of the present school would adhere to this idea, since by the unity of their views and the similarity of their processes, they are already virtually associated if not syndicated."¹ What a brilliant and practical idea, and how worthy, even though it emanates only from an artist and a

¹Lettres de Lecocq à Saint-Saëns, *La Revue Musicale*, October, 1925.

Frenchman, to be taken up by American business enterprise and "organized for efficiency" in a "nation-wide drive"!

The commercial ideal works against excellence, however, not only by the obvious method of the majority-controlled market, with its premium on mediocrity and its penalization of workmanship, but much more insidiously by the impalpable but immense force of social suggestion. From the start our American sentiment has favored gregariousness, and disliked distinction. In the early pioneer days this attitude was almost necessary to survival, as Mr. Herbert Croly has shown in "The Promise of American Life." "In such a society," he says "a man who persisted in one job, and who applied the most rigorous and exacting standards to his work, was out of place. His finished product did not serve its temporary purpose much better than did the current careless and hasty product, and his higher standards and peculiar ways constituted an implied criticism upon the easy methods of his neighbors. . . . It is no wonder that the pioneer democracy viewed with distrust and aversion the man with a special vocation and high standards of achievement." How tragically such an environment might work to the cripplement of a potentially great artist Van Wyck Brooks has shown in his "The Ordeal of Mark Twain," a book indispensable to anyone who wishes to understand the situation of American artists. In it he shows how Samuel Clemens found in the work of a Mississippi pilot the one field where the special skill of the artist was unimpeded, in the America of that day, by all sorts of social restrictions, taboos, and prejudices, and therefore the one activity in which he was ever fully happy; how as a writer he was all his life inhibited from fulness and accuracy of truth-telling by the taboos of commercial and parochial respectability, especially as embodied in Mrs. Clemens and her circle of friends; and how in the bitter last years his sense of his own failure as an artist disguised itself, in ways familiar to psychologists, in a universal disillusion and pessimism as personally pathetic as it was philosophically absurd. Mark Twain was the type of the American artist aborted by the herd.

And alas, the herd-spirit, with its dislike of individuality and its fanatical idolatry of organization, though there is less excuse for it now than in pioneer days, seems to be increasing rather than diminishing. It seems as if we had more blinkers and tighter harness than ever, as if the dulness of our bureaucrats and legalists but waxed with their authority. Mr. Croly's sketch is hardly a bad likeness of us to-day. Does not our intensely gregarious society still "submit good-naturedly and uncritically to current

standards?"—does it not still resent the "higher standards and peculiar ways" of the artist, and contemptuously call anyone who retires from social life in order to develop skill a "crank," a "quitter," or a "grouch?" Are such rare great artists as we still have, never "good mixers" or "one hundred per cent. Americans," any more popular with us than Emerson, Thoreau, Poe and Hawthorne were with their contemporaries? Do we learn to seek power rather by mastering ourselves than by trying to dominate others? Do we incline to solve our problems by thinking about them, rather than by the easier method of founding a society, framing by-laws and electing officers? And as for our artistic life, what shall we reply to such prophets of pessimism as Mr. John Gould Fletcher, who after pointing out that the artist of to-day, "in order to produce anything individual, original, or perfectly expressed, needs almost superhuman courage and constancy," since he "must resolve to disregard the demands of the public for a purely machine-made article," concludes that "such a task is so difficult to accomplish that the number of artists who have completely accomplished it in our day may practically be counted on the fingers of one hand," and that usually "the writer who desires to become an artist either dies young, goes insane, retires from competition or learns completely to stifle the art-impulse."

Certain it is that the only way we can hope to make head against such conditions is to understand them. Modern psychology, therefore, does us a good turn when it shows us that the artistic and the commercial ideal and method are neither of them wrong, only different and not to be confused. All men necessarily and rightly crave the sense of power; but while the artist gains it in one way, by retiring into solitude and mastering his material through concentration, the man of affairs, the characteristic American type, gains it in quite another, by going into the market-place and influencing as many of his fellows as he can. (Hence his habit of judging values in quantitative terms, such as "biggest," "richest," "most popular," "best seller," "largest majority," versus the artist's qualitative, incommensurable terms.) The business man works through influence, the artist through skill; while the one, therefore, must "run with the pack" the other is fated to "wander alone like a rhinoceros." When his power over others does not develop fast enough to suit him the man of business easily degenerates into the busybody; and it is noteworthy that the characteristic vice of contemporary America is meddlesomeness. Meddlesomeness and skill are fundamentally opposed. Meddlesomeness is the effort of the unskilful to gain the sense of power.

Skill gets this necessary sense directly, by individual action. Organization is thus often a confession of weakness; the skilful have no need to organize.

V

The only condition essential to the artist is thus the retirement, the freedom from distraction, in which he can develop his skill. "All that is best in human attainment" insists Thoreau, who magnificently practiced what he preached, "springs from retirement. In retirement we first become acquainted with ourselves, with our means, and ends. Whatever selfishness there may seem to be in such a discipline as this, exists only in appearance. In self-culture lies the ground and condition of all culture." But retirement becomes increasingly difficult, not only because it is physically invaded by the insistent interruptions of modern life—but far more subtly because its spiritual price is a disregard for the market, with its wholesale methods, such as often involves severe suffering. This is unavoidable since, as Hocking has said, "The marketable man is never the complete man in his uniqueness; and conversely the whole man is never marketable." The good workmen have usually realized this, and been willing to pay the price of their workmanship. "What the public likes," writes Stevenson to his friend Gosse, "is work (of any kind) a little loosely executed; so long as it is a little wordy, a little slack, a little dim and knotless, the dear public likes it. . . . It should (if possible) be a little dull into the bargain. . . . I do not write for the public; I do write for money, a nobler deity; and most of all for myself, not perhaps any more noble, but both more intelligent and nearer home."¹ So it was with Poe, who, as Mr. John Macy reminds us, knew what it was "to labor for an artistic result with cool precision while hunger and disease are in the workshop; to revise, always with new excellence, an old poem which is to be republished for the third or fourth time in a cheap journal; to make a manuscript scrupulously perfect to please one's self—for there is to be no extra loaf of bread as a reward, the market is indifferent to the finer excellences." Thoreau had most of the first edition of his first book returned to him by his publishers as unsalable, carried it on his own back up to the attic where he wrote, and then recorded in his journal: "I have now a library of nearly nine hundred volumes, over seven hundred of which I wrote myself. My works are piled up in my chamber, half as high as my head, my *opera omnia*. This is authorship. These are the work of my

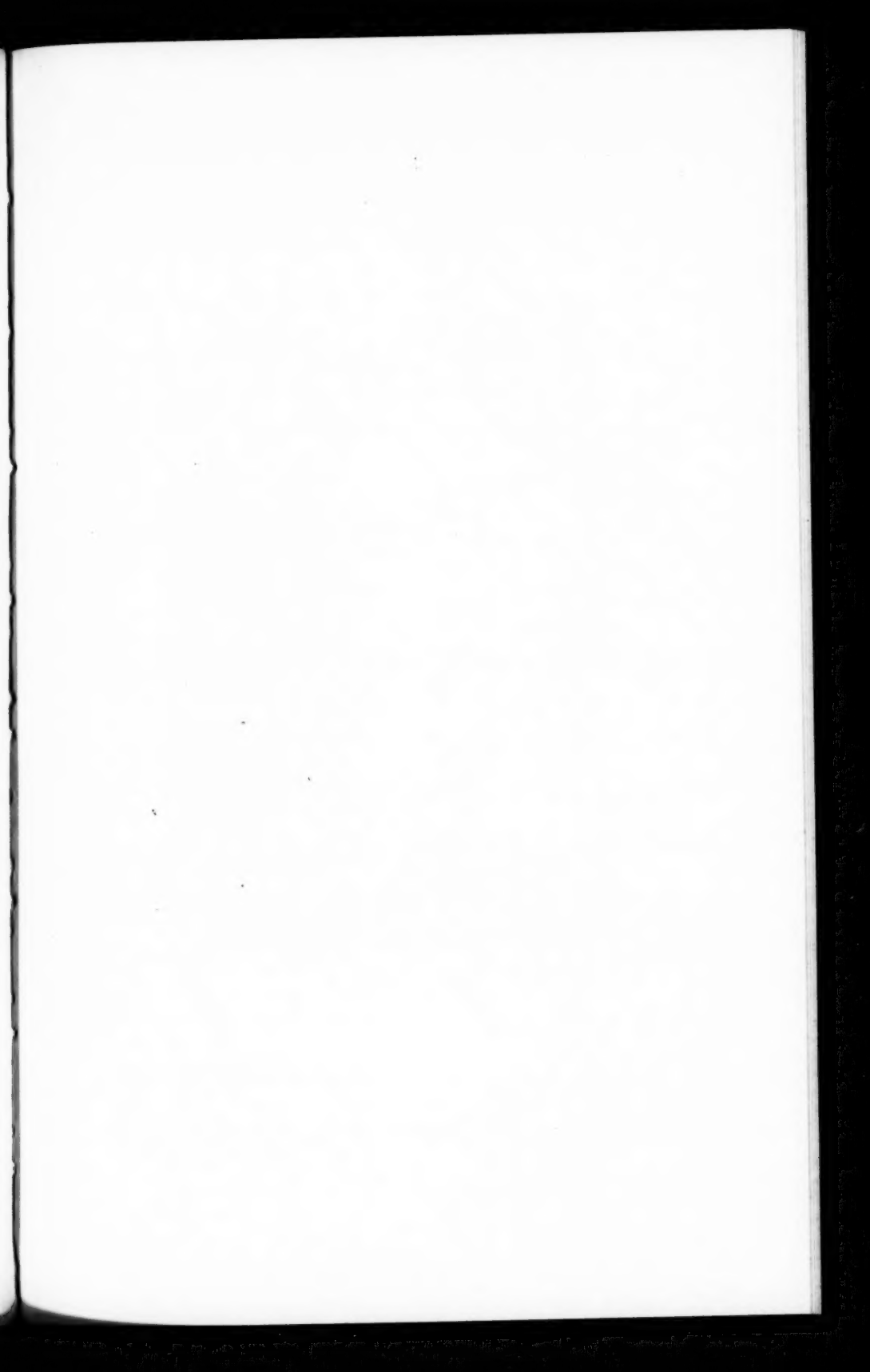
¹R. L. Stevenson: "Letters," II, 14.

brain . . . I can see now what I write for, and the result of my labors. Nevertheless, in spite of this result, sitting beside the inert mass of my works, I take up my pen to-night, to record what thought or experience I may have had, with as much satisfaction as ever. Indeed, I believe that this result is more inspiring and better than if a thousand had bought my wares. It affects my privacy less, and leaves me freer."

There is only one irremediable failure for an artist, and that is being persuaded away from his own path. When, instead of staying in his study where he belongs, "beholding" as Milton so beautifully said, "the bright countenance of truth in the quiet and still air of delightful studies" he allows himself to be tempted, cajoled, or bullied into the market-place, where he has no business to be, he finds himself deafened, blinded, distracted, his leisure invaded, his values turned topsy-turvy, and his work debauched. There is no cure for him then but to turn back to his own work and place. There he is strong; there his qualities tell, and his weaknesses are no longer fatal. That is a sublime defense of the artist—of all artists—that Emerson confided to his journal: "To every reproach I know but one answer, to go again to my own work. 'But you neglect your relations.' Yes, too true; then I will work the harder. 'But you have no genius.' Yes, then I will work the harder. 'But you have no virtues.' Yes, then I will work the harder. 'But you have detached yourself and acquired the aversation of all decent people: you must regain some position and relation.' Yes, I will work the harder."¹

Is it possible to practice this ideal of workmanship—an ideal that so great an artist as Emerson found so exacting in days so much simpler than ours—is it possible to practice it any longer in our twentieth-century America?—in the America of syndicated newspapers, chain magazines, circuit theatres and correspondence schools;—of chromo-lithograph pictures and "canned" music;—of chambers of commerce, rotarians, labor unions and women's clubs;—of Babbitt and Main Street, of Hollywood and Chautauqua;—of prohibition, fundamentalism, and the Ku Klux Klan? Is it possible any longer to be an artist, and survive? Who can tell? Probably the only way to find out is to try.

¹"Emerson in Concord," by Edward W. Emerson, p. 213.





MANUEL DE FALLA

MANUEL DE FALLA

A STUDY

By EDGAR ISTELE

IT is always a formidable undertaking to write about a contemporary, coetaneous artist still in the full flood of development, whose creative work, however significant it may be, presents itself so to say as a fragment, as "fragments of a great Confession" (Goethe), whose veritable goal still lies hidden behind the veils of the future. The task becomes doubly difficult when strong divergences in race, in artistic training, and in taste, are added. The amateur, whose enjoyment of art is strictly naïve, is quite right in judging of music according as he likes or dislikes it; and I myself, truth to tell, when regarding myself simply as an "audience," without the doleful duty of exposing my private impressions to the public gaze, adjust my attitude to the artist exclusively according as he gives me pleasure or—as is nowadays so often the case—the reverse. Then the question always arises, whether behind the work—that may or may not please for the moment—there stands a serious artistic endeavor, one whose aim will repay further research. Should this prove to be so, I must strive to grasp the import of a phenomenon thus recognized as significant, unless I occupy the standpoint of a certain Prussian censor—in the time of Kaiser Wilhelm II—who, when a modern poet asked him why he had prohibited his drama, made the classic reply: "Die ganze Richtung passt mir nicht!" (The whole tendency doesn't suit me).

At present, if one attempts to enumerate the leading musicians of the various countries, and reaches Spain, one can hardly mention, since the death of Pedrell, Albeniz, and Granados, any name but that of Manuel de Falla, besides which the names of other Spanish musicians worthy of mention seem pale, so far as their international—not their national—significance is concerned. Hence, it is quite characteristic of Spanish conditions that the works of the most important Spanish musician are not appreciated first of all in Spain, but by other nations. Not one work of Falla's has been published in Spain; his publishers live in Paris and

London,¹ and it was the Russian Ballet of the incomparable Karsavina that first carried his name abroad. While it can no longer be said that Falla is a prophet not without honor, save in his own country, the fact remains that Spain took no notice of her great son until an active propaganda, especially on the part of England, had brought home to the multitude a name previously known only in a narrower circle. The peculiar conditions obtaining in the Royal Opera House at Madrid scarcely permit national composers to get a hearing there; but in the Concert-Hall, at least, performances of Falla's works have recently gained in frequency.

Who is Manuel de Falla? About his life there is very little to be said. As the artist buries himself in his garden-house at Granada, living only for his work, even so does his life wholly disappear behind that work, and one despairs of finding a single episode whose narration might interest the public. Cadiz, that ancient Phœnician settlement (*Gadir*, the fortress), the city that faces Africa upon its height of shell-limestone as on a silver platter (*una taza de plata*), that aforetime provided Imperial Rome with the most lascivious dancers (*improbæ Gaditanæ*), was the birth-place of Manuel de Falla (Nov. 23, 1876). At the outset he was trained in his home town; later, in Madrid, his teachers were José Tragó (piano) and Felipe Pedrell (composition). With sparkling eyes the aged Pedrell once told me (see my article on him in *THE MUSICAL QUARTERLY* for April, 1925) how Falla, after he had won fame, never neglected to sign himself in his letters to the master his "grateful pupil." Indeed, we can see that Pedrell was the pioneer in the path later pursued in considerable measure by Falla to his ultimate successes. At the Madrid Conservatory Falla soon won the highest awards for piano, but a virtuoso's career had few charms for him. Early practice in the composition of piano-pieces was speedily followed by the public performance of chamber-music. About 1900 he was also temporarily obliged, in order to earn his living, to write theatrical music of the lighter sort; but as this presupposes a very special talent, which Falla does not possess, the results were unsatisfactory, and he, therefore, turned to the composition of operas. In 1905 he received for his opera *La Vida breve* the award offered by the Spanish Academy of Fine Arts. And so, in 1907, Falla found himself in Paris, where, despite material difficulties, he dwelt happily in the

¹I desire to thank the firms of I. & W. Chester, Ltd., of London, Durand, of Paris, Max Eschig & Cie, Paris, and Rouart, Lerolle & Cie, Paris, for their courtesy in placing their publications at my disposition. In the sequel the publisher's name accompanies each title.

companionship of congenial musicians, among them Debussy and Dukas. In 1913 *La Vida breve* was produced in Nice and Paris, a year later in Madrid, and finally (March 6, 1926) in the Metropolitan Opera House, New York. Meantime the composer had returned to his native land, since when he has lived in a small house on the Alhambra Mount in Granada. The first work to issue thence was the ballet *Amor brujo* (première in 1915 at the Teatro Lara, Madrid), followed the same year by the première of *Noches en los Jardines de España* (Nights in Spanish Gardens) for piano and orchestra. He then wrote the ballet *El Sombrero de tres picos* (The Three-cornered Hat), produced by the Russians on July 22, 1919, at the Alhambra Theatre in London with sweeping success; it had previously been staged in simpler form at the Teatro Eslava in Madrid, as a pantomime. During this time appeared a number of lesser works, which I shall take up together later. The last extended work of Falla's to be given to the public is a puppet-play, *El Retablo de Maese Pedro* (Master Pedro's Puppet-Show), which had a private stage-performance at Paris on June 25, 1923, but has been produced elsewhere only as a concert-performance.¹ Falla's very last work, with which he is still occupied, is a piano-concerto to be published by Eschig and to have its first public performance at the hands of Mme. Wanda Landowska, the admirable pianist and harpsichordist, in the United States.

Concerning Falla's personality Joaquin Turina (at present the most important Spanish composer beside Falla) writes, in a felicitous article in "The Chesterian" for May, 1920:

Manuel de Falla, with his almost ascetic features, his large forehead and bright eyes like two glowing embers, might almost be taken for an anchorite. His gentle bearing and invariably courteous manner does not conceal the inflexibility of his ideas, the strength of his principles, and a certain tenacity of purpose.

This ascetic austerity, the recluse, unsensual, almost monkish aspect, so well portrayed in various portraits by the Spanish painter Ribera, also finds expression in Falla's music in such wise as to render it very difficult for those whose emotionality is of a different order to discover a way into this remote sphere. Whoever judges Falla open-mindedly—not as one of the crowd of professional trumpeters of praise—must recognize that herein lies the chief difficulty in arriving at a comprehension of Falla's art, more especially as regards his latest works.

¹First performed as a puppet-play in New York by the League of Composers on December 20, 1925, at Town Hall with puppets designed by Remo Bufano.

And there is yet another difficulty, that resides in the peculiar character of Spanish folk-music, on which, in the final analysis, Falla's rhythmic, melodic and harmonic scheme is based, however "modernistically" it may comport itself, and however greatly it may be influenced by the ultra-modern French and Russians. To begin with, therefore, we must cast a glance at Spanish and, in particular, Andalusian folk-music.

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It has been remarked, that the history of a nation can be traced in its folk-music, and this applies in a very special sense to Spanish folk-music. The geographical situation of the Iberian peninsula predestined this region, isolated by surrounding seas and mountains, to unique developments. Both climatically and historically, Spain's particularism is unmistakable. Little affected by the currents of European happenings, her people have held fast to ancient manners and customs, and retained traces of historical occurrences, longer than those of other lands; and even remote upheavals and stratifications resulting from foreign invasions still give astonishing evidences of vigorous survival, and not least in the case of music.

The earliest inhabitants of the peninsula were the Iberians, a race still thought to survive in the Basques, with their highly characteristic music. For these Basques, who call themselves *Euskaldunæ*, likewise speak a language enigmatic in many respects, that has nothing in common with other European tongues. About 500 B. C. there was a Celtic immigration; but still earlier (1100 B. C.) Phœnicians founded the cities of Cadiz and Malaga; further, from about 550, towns (*emporion*) were founded on the eastern coast by the Greeks. Some believe that these various immigrations have left their traces in ancient dance-tunes still extant; in many cases, however, this would seem to depend more on the imagination of the investigator than on actual fact. On the whole, it seems hardly possible to demonstrate Carthaginian or Roman influences, although both peoples played an important rôle on the Iberian peninsula (the Carthaginians from 236 B. C., the Romans from 133 B. C.). Still less can the influence be felt of the semibarbarous Germanic tribes, the Vandals, Suevi and Visigoths (from 409 A. D.). But the matter assumes an entirely different aspect with the incursion of the Moors from Africa in the year 711, when the Goths lost to Tarik (still recalled in history by the name of Gibraltar) the battle at Jerez de la Frontera, the

home of the far-famed sherry wine. By the year 713 all Spain, with the exception of Asturia (whose music, too, remained almost free from Moorish influence), had been conquered by the Moors, and this fact had a lasting effect on Spanish folk-music. There was besides, especially in Andalusia, a strong infusion of the Gypsy element.

Manuel de Falla himself once let fall some very interesting remarks concerning what he termed "natural" Spanish music, which differs essentially from the so-called "genuine Spanish" music dished up abroad in the variety-theatres. He said:

Our music must be based on the natural music of our people, on the dances and songs, that do not always show close kinship. In some cases the rhythm alone is marked by clapping ("palmas") and drumsticks ("palillas"), without any melody; in others the melody stands out by itself; so that one should not employ vocal melody alone as a manifestation of folk-music, but everything that accompanies it or exists without it, never losing sight of the milieu wherein all this has its being.

Hitherto our composers have studied Spanish music only in and from Madrid; they did not travel, did not see or hear or take note of the festivals and occupations of the countryfolk, and so their sole resource was the scanty printed collections.

What little they did utilize was perverted by the obsolete harmonization, so contrary to the nature of our melodies, which, like the Russian folk-music, are based on the ancient modes, those of the Liturgy and the Orient. The sources of these and of Spanish music lie so close together that, strange to say, the Russian composers were the first to have success in writing Spanish symphonic music so conceived that on a first hearing it was thought that we had copied the Russians.

Our musicians ignored these sources of harmony, and treated Spanish music in the Italian or German manner, being most successful in the Italian style because of the kinship of race and region. The sore point was, that they took over what was worst in Italy—the fearful, lamentable decadence of her music. From Monteverdi and his contemporaries they learned nothing, while enthusiastically aping Bellini and Donizetti. "Twixt sheep and goat they chose the goat."

The period of the "grand Zarzuela"¹ was an imitation of the Italian opera, often its superior [?], but after all only an imitation. Barbieri [he refers to Francisco Barbieri, who lived 1823-94 in Madrid as a composer, conductor, and musicologist, of high rank in each sphere] is one of the few examples of comparative independence, whose lucky throw was *El Barberillo de Lavapiés*. Chueca [1846-1908, in Madrid], whose style is the purest and most Spanish of any of our older musicians, pursued another path; he adapted foreign rhythms to Spanish music by "nationalizing" them so successfully that we need mention only one example, the "Schottische." It is a curious fact that we moderns have

¹The name Zarzuela is derived from that of a former Royal castle where song-plays, the forerunners of the modern operettas, were performed. The Spanish Zarzuelas (whether "grand" or "small") are, however, thoroughgoing national operettas, and have nothing but the dialogue in common with the modern international ballet-operetta.

been censured as "foreignized" because we avoid its rhythm, whose origin is none the less wholly foreign.

In sum, of our earlier stage-composers there remain only Chueca, Barbieri, Chapi [1851-1909 in Madrid] with his *Revoltoza*, and Bretón [1850-1923 in Madrid] with his *La Verbena de la Paloma*; not to forget Pedrell, foremost of masters and the teacher of Vives [b. 1870], Millet [b. 1867], Albeniz [1860-1909], and myself. It redounds to Pedrell's everlasting credit that he was the first to take up our national treasure and subject it to luminous analysis.

Of symphonic music very little can be said. It has been written in the German style and is a flat failure. "Der Fall Wagner" was the same in Spain as in other countries; a case of infatuation and frightful error, that might have been excusable in a land less endowed with musical wealth than Spain, but with us has been the cause of an all-too-manifest lethargy of our musical sense.

It has been occasionally asserted that we have no traditions. We have, it is true, no written tradition; but in our dance and our rhythm we possess the strongest of traditions, that none can obliterate; we have the ancient modes, which, by virtue of their extraordinary inherent freedom, we can use as inspiration dictates. What was first done by the Russians, and then by Debussy, is native to our souls. Only one thing is wanting—to call us "Debussyites"!

The modern composer's road lies clear before him; it leads him to an undistorted perception of the folk-songs and folk-dances where they are freely manifested, not where they are done to order on payment of 100 *pesetas*, the usual procedure of English visitors in Granada. If one were to compose after such patterns, the music would surely not be worth the expended 100 *pesetas*. You will find unconventional rhythms, boundless riches, in the wonderful guitar, played by people who have not studied music, by blind men in the streets of Andalusia who elicit from their instruments such tones as never were heard.

Thus Falla; with whom we may disagree in some details—e. g., his estimate of Italian opera—whereas his views on Spanish folk-music coincide with those of the highest authorities. It is not generally known (to digress for a moment) that the founder of modern Russian music, Glinka, who spent two years (1825-7) in Spain and mostly in Granada, was an impassioned student of Spanish guitar-playing, especially that of its then greatest exponent, Francisco Rodriguez, and of a certain Felix Castillo, and sought to tinge his Spanish orchestral pieces with these strange new tones. Very interesting details concerning Glinka's studies in Spanish music may be found in Oskar von Riesemann's "Monographien zur russischen Musik," Vol. I (Munich, 1923). In one point, however, Riesemann makes a quite typical mistake; he writes (p. 171):

Glinka, with his almost morbid modesty, prefers to ascribe the authorship of these variations to a Spanish guitar-player. . . . But this

is really stretching politeness too far. Glinka's orchestra and a *guitar* are two such wholly incommensurable quantities, that of all the contrapuntal wizardries and all the spirit-stirring, amazingly original instrumental effects that Glinka with prodigal hand dispenses in this score from the cornucopia of his phantasy, not even diffident intimations would be practicable on such a poverty-stricken [?] instrument as the guitar.

Anyone who has heard the best modern Spanish guitarists, or has sojourned in Andalusia with an open ear, will join Falla in calling the guitar an instrument of wonderful possibilities rather than poverty-stricken. To be sure, the great difficulty begins when one attempts to fix these unheard-of tones and rhythms on paper, or to reproduce them with the aid of other instruments. Falla himself has not been able fully to conquer this difficulty.

Falla has written especially for the guitar only one small piece entitled "*Homenaje*" (Homage) for the "*Tombeau de Claude Debussy*"; it is a short piece dedicated to the memory of Debussy and published by Chester, London, in 1921. In this melodically rather insignificant worklet Falla employs the Spanish guitar-technique. It has also appeared as a transcription for piano.

Still greater difficulties than those found in the instrumental sphere are met with in the vocal domain when one tries to fix the Andalusian melodies on paper and to reproduce them. The exponents and disseminators of Andalusian song, the *cantaores* (singers), individuals from the lower classes endowed with good voices, are the inheritors of Moorish song, and adorn their tunes with all manner of arabesques and gurglings, an infinity of vocal inflexions, that simply cannot be reproduced in our notation. Inzenga (1828-91), one of the finest connoisseurs of Spanish folk-music, once observed:

When listening to these *cantaores*, so long-winded and untiring in their singular specialty, with which they show off like finished artists, one fancies that they are advancing, with their swift triplets, their interminable semitonic scales ascending and descending, and all the other oriental embellishments, through the twistings and turnings of a trackless labyrinth, where it is impossible to follow them. Then again, they dwell unbearably on the long notes, and close with a dying susurrations like the mournful sigh of the wind through the branches; they hold our senses in suspense between desolation and ravishment with those everlasting "ays" that move our hearts—that one can feel, but not imitate.

A thorough analysis of these Andalusian songs shows that they are grounded, essentially, on two or three guitar-chords

which give birth, so to speak, to an endless wealth of embellishment. It is impossible to reproduce these embellishments exactly, because they are never the same and admit of innumerable variations. If one endeavors, notwithstanding, to imitate them, one must cling to the essential framework, the melodic skeleton, as it were. Furthermore, the style of these songs varies with the environment (the *ambiente*, as the Spaniards say) in which they are sung. Written down and travestied on the piano, they lose their vital charm.

Giving due consideration to all this, one may succeed in establishing a fruitful contact with Falla's art, a product native to that environment, always assuming that one already has a vivid appreciation of Spain. One who has it not will hardly be able to acquire a taste for this art, so difficult of approach and often insufferably monotonous for ears European or American.

An interesting example of the way Falla at first looked at Spanish folk-music through French spectacles, and heard it with French ears, and how he later gave himself wholeheartedly to autochthonous Spanish music, will be found in comparing two books of songs, the first composed in 1909 and published by Rouart, Lerolle & C^e of Paris (*Trois Mélodies*), while the second (*Siete Canciones populares Españolas*, with French translations) was published in 1922 by Max Eschig, Paris. Each of these books includes a Seguidilla. The one contained in the earlier book is certainly the more "grateful" for concert performance; but it is set to a poem by Théophile Gautier, and still wholly in the style of those "Españoladas" (as the Spaniards call foreign imitations of their national style), with which we are familiar in Bizet's *Carmen* and the would-be Spanish compositions of Chabrier, Chaminade and Massenet. In such works certain Spanish rhythmic and melodic effects are utilized in an agreeable international style only remotely akin to the nature of Spanish folk-music. Quite otherwise the second book, which, with its seven numbers (*El Paño moruno*, *Seguidilla murciana*, *Asturiana*, *Jota*, *Nana*, *Canción*, *Polo*), transports us straight to the heart of Spanish folk-music—mostly Andalusian, though one song belongs to Asturia, and another to Aragon. Melodies and texts are altogether original and typical; their selection was not guided in the least by pleasing quality or with an eye to popularity abroad. Always interesting both rhythmically and harmonically, but often monotonous melodically, they form an attractive introduction to Falla's creative activity in the grand style, which begins with the opera *La Vida breve* (literally, *The Short Life*).

La Vida breve (Paris, Max Eschig) is entitled a "lyric drama" in two acts and four tableaux, wherein the emphasis lies rather on "lyric" than on "drama." The so-called action, in the book by Carlos Fernandez-Shaw, develops in Granada at the present time, and offers extremely few dramatic situations. The plot can be told in very few words. A young Gypsy girl, *Salud* (soprano), who dwells with her grandmother (contralto), is engaged to marry a young Spaniard, *Paco* (tenor), who swears to be ever true to her. But her uncle *Sarvaor* (bass) soon learns that *Paco* intends to wed a maiden of his own race, *Carmela* (mezzo soprano). This is the first Tableau. The second has nothing to do with the plot, but presents a colorful tableau of the Alhambra as seen from Sacromonte, with changing light-effects. In Act II the action continues; during the wedding festivities of *Paco* and *Carmela*, held in the house of her brother *Manuel*, *Carmela*, joined later by her grandmother and uncle, stands in the street at the window remarking on the fate of poor maidens in general and the ingratitude of *Paco* in particular. Another change of scene displays the interior of the house where the wedding is in progress, with a renewed accompaniment of songs and dances. Finally *Salud*, with her two relatives, intrudes on the scene and takes the faithless *Paco* to task; he denies everything, she swears that she is telling the truth; he would have her expelled, but *Salud*, overcome by emotion, falls dead to the floor. Her grandmother curses *Paco*.

From this sketch it is quite evident that there is not a vestige of genuine dramatic construction; first of all, in *Paco's* personality there is no psychological development. Love and faithlessness are set side by side without motivation or transition, so that the figure of the tenor impresses us as brutal and unsympathetic (however "true to nature" the type may be). What struck the composer's fancy in this libretto was the "local color," which fairly smothers the action proper. The voice of a *cantaor*, several huckstresses and distant voices break in upon the action and lend the scene that specifically Andalusian color that was the composer's chief concern. The dances likewise occupy a broad space. According as one takes the lyric or dramatic point of view, this procedure will seem to be an advantage or a disadvantage. Personally, I favor the dramatic aspect; but in fairness to the opposite standpoint I shall quote a few remarks that I find in a "Miniature Essay" on Falla published by Chester:

Manuel de Falla's music, in spite of its frequent alliance with poetry or stage, and in spite of its dazzling colour, remains essentially music

pure and simple, and as such is free from literary or pictorial elements. It is music's magic power of conjuring up impressions that cannot be conveyed by any other form of art that Falla seeks to capture and reproduce in this work. Whatever literary or pictorial associations it leans on, are merely the framework, the pretext for music: the latter is never degraded [?] to the subordinate part of a mere commentary [?]. As a natural consequence of the composer's constant care to express the infinite variety of mental images that lie behind each subject chosen by him as an emotional basis, may be observed a continuous change of proceeding from one work to other, and indeed, in very rare cases, within a single work, if such a course is justified or necessitated by its underlying idea.

A thorough study of the stylistic peculiarities of each work would be feasible only if it were possible for me to print numerous musical excerpts. Here I am limited to quoting one characteristic sample of his style, this being a few measures which, while they cannot be described as a leading-motive (there are none such in the work), might possibly be termed the "motto" of the work; they are introduced in a striking manner on page 10 of Act I, and repeated on page 85 of Act II with a slight change of text ("maiden" instead of "man") and with other accompaniment. This accompaniment I quote in the version of both the first and second acts:

Largamente

Voice
(Act I, Tenor)
(Act II, Soprano)

Mal - ha - ya el hombre, mal - ha - ya, que na - ce con ne - gro si - no. — Mal-

Orchestra
Act I

pp

Orchestra
Act II

con anima, ma sempre calmo

ha - ya quin na - ce yun - que_ en vez de nacer mar - ti - llo_

in tempo, ma non f dolciss. etc.

s. etc.

(Unhappy the man, who is born under an evil star. Unhappy he, who enters the world as anvil rather than as hammer.)

It is characteristic of Falla that after this first attempt he turned his back on legitimate "opera" (or what he understood as such) and thenceforward wrote only scenic music for which pantomimic expression was essentially sufficient. His next stage-work, *El Amor brujo* (Love the Magician), is described as an "Andalusian Gypsy scene" and ballet, in one act. (Published by Chester, London.) The plan of the action is by Gregorio Martinez Sierra (b. 1882), one of the most prominent dramatic poets of Spain, and manager of the Teatro Eslava in Madrid, a playhouse noted for its modernism—in so far as the term is (relatively) applicable to Spain. Only four leading characters are engaged, together with a number of young and old Gypsy women:—*Candelas*, a young Gypsy woman, *Lucia*, a young Gypsy girl, the *Spectre* (a dancer in ancient Gypsy costume, with blackened face, both comical and frightful to behold), and a young Gypsy, *Carmelo*, the lover of *Candelas*. As I have not heard the work as a stage-performance, but only in concert-arrangement, under Arbós, in Madrid, I give below the synopsis of the piano-score:

Candelas, a young, very beautiful and passionate woman, has loved a wicked, jealous and dissolute, but fascinating and cajoling Gypsy. Although having led a very unhappy life with him, she has loved him

intensely and mourned his loss, unable ever to forget him. Her memory of him is something like a hypnotic dream, a morbid, gruesome and maddening spell. She is terrified by the thought that the dead may not be entirely gone, that he may return, that he continues to love her in the fierce, shadowy, faithless and caressing way. She lets herself become a prey to her thoughts of the past, as if under the influence of a spectre; yet she is young, strong, and vivacious. Spring returns and, with it, love, in the shape of Carmelo.

Carmelo, a handsome youth, enamoured and gallant, makes love to her. Candelas, not unwilling to be won, almost unconsciously returns his love; but the obsession of her past weighs against her present inclination. When Carmelo approaches her and endeavours to make her share in his passion, the Spectre returns and terrifies Candelas, whom he separates from her lover. They cannot exchange the kiss of perfect love.

Carmelo being gone, Candelas languishes and droops; she feels as if bewitched, and her past love seems to flutter heavily round her like malevolent and foreboding bats. But this evil spell has to be broken, and Carmelo believes to have found a remedy. He has once been the comrade of the Gypsy whose spectre haunts Candelas. He knows that the dead lover was the typical faithless and jealous Andalusian gallant. Since he appears to retain, even after death, his taste for beautiful women, he must be taken by his weak side and thus diverted from his posthume jealousy, in order that Carmelo may exchange with Candelas the perfect kiss against which the sorcery of love cannot prevail.

Carmelo persuades Lucia, a young and enchantingly pretty Gypsy girl, the friend of Candelas, to simulate acceptance of the Spectre's addresses. Lucia, out of love for Candelas and from feminine curiosity, agrees. The idea of flirtation with a ghost seems to her attractive and novel. And then, the dead man was so mirthful in life! Lucia takes up the sentinel's post. Carmelo returns to make love to Candelas, and the Spectre intervenes . . . but he finds the charming little Gypsy, and neither can nor will resist the temptation, not being experienced in withstanding the allurements of a pretty face. He makes love to Lucia, coaxing and imploring her, and the coquettish young Gypsy almost brings him to despair. In the meantime, Carmelo succeeds in convincing Candelas of his love, and life triumphs over death and over the past. The lovers at last exchange the kiss that defeats the evil influence of the Spectre, who perishes, definitely conquered by love.

A singular subject, which afforded the composer ample scope for songs, pantomime and dances. The element of weirdness, in particular, was brought out by Falla with astonishing accuracy of aim, and this, too, in the instrumental coloration. Rhythmically, melodically, and consequently harmonically, the work is almost entirely based on the peculiar Spanish Gypsy music which discovers a certain kinship with the familiar Hungarian Gypsy music, and yet pursues a way all its own. Whereas the Hungarian music operates almost exclusively with the well-known "Gypsy scale" (minor with raised Fourth, i. e., a leading-note to

the dominant), the Spanish Gypsy music, although it also often employs the characteristic step of the augmented Second, offers wider possibilities, which Falla utilizes with great skill. Tripartite measures (3-4 and 3-8) are the rule, while 2-4 time is occasionally met with, besides the 7-8 time characteristic of Gypsy music. In lieu of extended explanations I append a few characteristic measures from the "Ritual Fire-Dance" with which evil spirits are supposed to be exorcised:

Allegro ma non troppo

The musical score is for a piano accompaniment in 7/8 time, marked 'Allegro ma non troppo'. It consists of four systems of music. The first system begins with a forte (*ff*) dynamic. The second system includes a piano (*pp*) dynamic marking. The third system includes a mezzo-forte (*mf*) and crescendo (*cresc.*) marking. The fourth system ends with 'etc.'.

A certain affinity with Russian folk-music, as if in an arrangement by Rimsky-Korsakow, is unmistakable.

The merriest work of Falla's, and the one that first made his name known in wider circles abroad, is the ballet *El Sombrero de tres picos* (The Three-Cornered Hat; publ. by Chester, London), whose scenic plan also derives from Martinez Sierra. The very

first version, a pantomime entitled *El Corregidor y la Molinera* (The Corregidor¹ and the Miller's Wife), followed the plot of the similarly named novel by Pedro Antonio de Alarcón (1833-91) quite closely, with the drawback (as we are told by Turina, the conductor of the orchestra of full seventeen pieces at the première) that the composer had to follow the action into every detail, thus destroying the unity of the score. "The music therefore continually reflected a certain anxiety on the composer's part, as if he were trying to disentangle himself, so to speak, from the external network." The transformation of the pantomime into a ballet accompanied by full orchestra did away with this difficulty, to be sure, because the music was now permitted full expansion in well-rounded dance-numbers; but a new difficulty supervened. I saw the work performed in Madrid by the Russians with the original scenery (which struck me as extravagantly modern) by Picasso, and although I was familiar with the original novel, I found it very hard to follow the action after a fashion. True, one finds in the piano-score, with references to corresponding numbers in the orchestral score, a lengthy prefatory synopsis with very detailed explanations of the action on which each musical section is based; yet despite the wonderfully plastic dumb-show of the Russian dancers, only a very small part of the plot reaches one's comprehension directly, and anyone who does not know Alarcón's novel, a gem of Spanish narrative art, has no idea whatever why the characters are leaping about the stage. So, to arrive at an understanding of the whole play, we must first cast a glance on that novel.

In the first edition, dating from July, 1874, of the novel, the masterpiece of the poet, who was born not far from Granada in Guadix, Andalusia, Alarcón informs us that he first heard the story (that he locates in the year 1805) more than thirty-five years earlier from the lips of an alphabetic goatherd who had never left his native place, but there played the part of fun-maker and tale-teller at wedding-parties and other festivities. One evening this goatherd recited a popular versified story about the "Corregidor and the Miller's Wife," or the "Miller and Madame la Corregidora." This story must have been known far and wide in Andalusia, for in the course of years Alarcón heard it again and again in numerous, in part decidedly broad versions from the

¹The word cannot be precisely translated. In Old Spain the Corregidor was an important official, a chief magistrate of a town, combining in his person the highest administrative, judicial and executive functions, and therefore greatly to be feared. As a "badge of office" he wore a three-cornered hat, whence the name of the work in the original novel.

mouths of blind wandering minstrels. But at bottom, says Alarcón, all these versions were identical: "tragi-comical, jocular and frightfully epigrammatic, like all the dramatic moral teachings that our people are fond of; but the incidental 'business,' the chance technique, departed far, very far from the narration of the goatherd."

Alarcón now determined to free the charming tale of later increments, especially those of an indecent nature, and to reconstruct it in all its pristine, naïve drollery—a task in which he was admirably successful. In a setting of Old Andalusian folk-scenes, drawn in detail with a loving touch, he tells the story of the miller's fair wife, with whom the almighty Corregidor fell in love, but only to find himself threatened with wearing the horns wherewith he had hoped to crown the head of his wiliest opponent, the miller.

In a mill, most likely hard by Guadix, there dwelt the miller Lucas—who, though a hunchback and ill-favored, was singularly amiable, witty and kind-hearted—with his altogether charming little spouse Frasquita in happy though childless union. Frasquita, "the lovely milleress," wore, as Alarcón describes her, much the same costume as the women of Goya:

She wore her skirt so short, that her small feet and well-turned ankles were visible. She wore her lace shawl after the mode of the Madrid women; her hair was twisted into a knot, thus enhancing the charm of her head and neck; in her little ears were pretty earrings, and many a ring adorned hands already famed for their hardness, although white. To crown all, Frasquita's voice had all the tones of a melodious instrument, and her laugh was gay and silvery as the chiming of sweet bells on a holiday.

Thus appeared the heroine of the novel and the ballet. No wonder that her husband worshipped her with a love in which as yet no jealousy was mingled—a fact explained (as Alarcón says) by the circumstances that Lucas had more faith in her virtue than she in his; that he possessed the keener insight, and well knew how fondly he was loved and how great was his wife's self-respect; that Lucas was an out and out man, a man out of a Shakespearean piece, of a simple, straightforward disposition, incapable of doubt; who believed and died; who loved or killed; who admitted neither gradation nor transition between the highest transports and the annihilation of his happiness. He was an Othello in sandals and peaked cap, such as fancy may conjure up in the first act of a tragedy. But he possessed something else, that Othello lacked—humor; and so it was only in

their humorous aspect that he viewed the marked attentions paid to the lovely Frasquita by the man with the immense unmistakable cocked hat, the ugly as well as crookback Corregidor. But one fine day matters took another turn. The farce was soon to become a tragedy. When the Corregidor, on whom Frasquita, for practical reasons and in full accord with her husband, had bestowed a few kindly glances, thought the fortress ready to capitulate, he had the miller called away one night to a neighboring village, ostensibly summoned to appear before the burgo-master as an important witness, he himself proposing meanwhile to pay the miller's wife a clandestine visit. But the miller speedily discovered why he had been lured away; he escaped upon his donkey and hastened homeward, not, however, without noting a mysterious figure, likewise on donkeyback, riding in the opposite direction, while the animals greeted each other. On arrival at the mill, Lucas made a direful discovery!—the door stood open; of his wife, not a sign; but by the fireplace were hanging the clothes of the Corregidor, with the famous three-cornered hat. As if this were not enough, he found on the table the much-desired commission for her nephew, undersigned by the Corregidor; and, on peeping through the keyhole, he saw the head of the detested man on the pillow. "As in the Moor of Venice, the feeling that he had been deceived dealt a deathblow to all the love in his heart, suddenly so transforming his whole nature that the world seemed to him like some new sphere in which he had just set foot. The sole difference between the Moor and Lucas was, that the latter's natural disposition was less tragical and severe, and more egotistical, than that of Desdemona's crazed murderer." Hence, Lucas dismissed the first idea that presented itself—to kill his wife and the Corregidor; his eyes fell on the Corregidor's clothing, which would fit himself, the hunchback. And with Mephistophelean glee he donned all the clothes of the Corregidor, from shoes to cocked hat and red cloak; and then, imitating the Corregidor's gait, he murmured, "Now I'll play the Corregidor!"

What had happened meanwhile in the mill? An hour after the miller had ridden forth, Frasquita heard a cry for help. Thinking it to be her husband, she opened the door, to be confronted by the Corregidor, who in pursuing his gallant adventure had fallen into the brook and was wet through. When he becomes importunate and seeks to bribe her with the commission for her nephew, she threatens him with a weapon; he falls to the floor, half-senseless from fright, and begs her to call on the constable

stationed near by for aid, as he is dying; she agrees to do so, but resolves—under pretense of fetching the doctor from the town where the Corregidor lives—to ride over to the village in search of her husband. Now, as we have seen, the Corregidor makes himself at home in the mill and goes to bed, after hanging his clothes up to dry. And the miller's wife, riding her donkey, met, like her husband, a mysterious figure—from which we may conclude that humans are oftentimes more asinine than donkeys. But if Frasquita and Lucas had recognized each other out there in the fields the story would not have ended as merrily as it actually did.—When Frasquita inquired for her husband in the village it was ascertained that Lucas had decamped on his donkey; and now it dawned upon our good Frasquita who it probably was that rode the other donkey. So back she rode with the burgomaster to the mill, to look for her husband. During this time the Corregidor had recovered somewhat, but saw himself obliged to put on the miller's clothes. And he guesses what the sly miller intends to do: "Lucas is on his way to town, dressed as the Corregidor. And the Lord knows whether he has got into the apartments of Madame la Corregidora in his disguise!" Now the Corregidor's only care was, to catch the miller before the mischief was done; for Frasquita had told him that her husband was "capable of anything." So the Corregidor, dressed in the miller's clothes, proceeds to town with Frasquita, the constable, and the burgomaster. When he, as the Corregidor, seeks admission to his house, he is informed that His Worship the Corregidor came home long before and went to bed. Finally, the Corregidora unbends so far as to receive her spouse and his companions in the drawing-room; but she addresses him as Miller Lucas and treats him accordingly, even threatening to have him arrested if he behaves himself improperly, for he must be either drunk or crazy. All confirm her statement that the Corregidor had come home in full official costume two hours earlier, in order (as she adds ironically) "to repose from the exertions of his noble daily task, to continue on the morrow to protect the honor and the lives of the citizens, the sacredness of the homes, and the chastity of the women, and so to hinder whomsoever from forcing himself, disguised as the Corregidor, into the chamber of a strange woman." In witness whereof she calls in Miller Lucas, garbed as Corregidor, who imitates the Corregidor's voice so deceptively that all are amazed and (with the exception of the real Corregidor) burst out laughing. In the end the tangle is unraveled; Lucas and Frasquita, at least, are satisfied that neither has been unfaithful to the other; but the Corregidora,

finding herself at last alone with her husband, condescends to say, in the tone of a Tsarina banishing some Minister to Siberia: "And if you live a thousand years, you will never learn what happened in my chamber this night!" And so saying, she slams the chamber-door in his face. The Corregidor, however, cynical as always, merely murmurs: "Well! I never thought to get off so easy!"

This subject-matter, though essentially epic, still presents some dramatic situations; and it was these that led Hugo Wolf, the song-composer (who, to be sure approaches the story from the lyric side), to make a comedy-opera out of it. Unfortunately, the libretto written by Rosa Mayreder for his opera *Der Corregidor* (produced in 1896) is most incapably constructed and follows the details of the novel too closely; moreover, the very polyphonic music in the style of *Die Meistersinger* colors Spain to the hue in which a post-romantic musician conceives her, and not as she musically is.

Martinez Sierra also follows the story of the novel in its principal features, dividing it into two parts; the one plays in the daytime, and closes with a fandango danced by Frasquita and Lucas, whereas the other, leading off with a popular merry-making, plays by night. The scene of both is the mill (Wolf's opera, in four acts, also has a scene at the Corregidor's house). Consequently, the clever ending of the novel has to be altered and decidedly coarsened; the rôle that the miller sought to play in the Corregidor's house is only hinted at, the Corregidora does not appear on the stage, and at the close her husband is beaten and—like the puppet in Goya's celebrated picture, "The Jumping-Jack"—duped.

Falla's music to this work should be reckoned, in my opinion, among his happiest conceptions. It is fresh, more cheerful than his other scores, and bears throughout the stamp of his individuality together with a character typically Andalusian. The very introduction transports us with the utmost skill into the midst of the milieu of the novel. A voice sings a song after the type of the Andalusian folk-songs, without musical accompaniment, interrupted or sustained solely by the enthusiastic cries of "Olé!" from the hearers and the clapping of hands and clatter of castanets. The hand-clapping (the so-called *palmas*), that simply marks the rhythm very noisily, is of oriental origin and much in favor among the Gypsies, like the interspersed cries of *Olé!* (untranslatable, akin to *Bravo!*), *Salero!* (literally salt-shaker, meaning "O you sweet thing!"), *Bendita sea tu madre!* ("Blessed be thy

mother!"), all intended to encourage (*jalear*) the singer. This characteristic introduction, played with the curtain down, is given in part below.

Allegro ma non troppo

Mezzo-soprano

Voices (Cries)

Hand-claps

Castanets

f *p*

O - lé! O - lé! O - lé! O - lé!

ff *f*

Poco meno mosso
con forza

Ca - sa di - ta, ca - sa di - ta,

Ca - sa di - ta, ca - sa di - ta,

dim. *p*

cio-rra con tran-ca la puer - ta,

O - lé! O - lé! O - lé!

f *p*

ff

Ca - sa di ta, ca - sa

O - lé!

ff *dim.* *p*

di - ta, cie - rra con tran - ca la puer - ta: que aun - que el
 dia - blo es - té dor - mi - do, a lo me - jor se des -
 pier - ta! Que aun - que el dia - blo es - té dor - mi - do, etc.
 O - le!

(Little house, little house, bolt thy door with a cross-bar. *Olé!*—*[Repeat.]*—For though the devil is asleep, beware of him the more!)

The most interesting number of the score proper is (as Turina, himself an Adalusian, testifies) the dance of the miller, "because of its typically Andalusian character, its fascinating rhythm, which is like an affirmation of southern art, and its Moorish colouring." Below are a few characteristic measures:

Moderato assai
 molto ritmico e pesante
 p cresc. molto
 ff
 fff marc.
 pp



Of the remaining numbers must be mentioned the first dance of Frasquita and the Finale of the work, a brilliant Jota, with which is interwoven a dance popular in Andalusia, the Vito. The orchestra is a riot of color, and charming in sound throughout; its treatment is visibly influenced by Rimsky-Korsakow.

In sharp contrast to this merry Andalusian work is a composition born of the spirit of the Castilian plains in all their dreary and interminable breadth; a spirit that must seem insufferably monotonous, drab and colorless to one who is not wholly familiar with the character of this landscape. This composition is *El Retablo de Maese Pedro* (Master Pedro's Puppet-show), based on an episode in Cervantes' "Don Quixote" (it is called a "musical and scenic adaptation" of an episode from "Don Quixote"), and represented as "devotionally dedicated to the fame of Miguel de Cervantes." In order to obtain a clear idea of the action one should refer to its source, Cervantes himself; for this work of Falla's (which I have heard only in a concert-performance at Madrid, conducted by the composer in person) was quite incomprehensible for uninformed hearers even in its stage-production at Paris, as we are informed by G. Jean-Aubry in a critique in "The Chesterian" for October, 1923.

Who is Maese Pedro, and what part does his puppet-show play? In Chapter XXII of his unique romance Cervantes introduces, among the criminals later set free by Don Quixote, a certain Gines Passamonte, known as Ginesillo de Parapilla (the jest lies in the fact that de Parapilla, freely Englished, means "the Plunderer"), "a man of good education, some thirty years of age, who squinted with one eye toward the other," and who (as the guard over the criminals told Don Quixote) had alone committed more crimes than all the rest together, being so daring and crafty that they did not think him safely confined even when most elaborately fettered, but always feared he might escape. And Gines himself boasted that he had written his life-history in prison; a tale of rascality that cast into the shadow the celebrated Spanish romance "*Lazarillo de Tormes*" (1554; said to be by Diego Hurtado de Mendoza), for his own experiences had been so pleasant and amusing that no invention could be funnier. And Cervantes himself corroborates this assertion by narrating (in Part II of his romance, from Chap. XXV onward) a knavish trick perpetrated by this Gines and not fully cleared up until Chap. XXVII, when the mysterious Maese Pedro of the puppet-show is stripped of his disguise and discovered to be none other than the rogue Gines. What especially astonished the country-folk was Pedro's habit of travelling about with a trained monkey which ostensibly whispered all manner of secrets into his ear—secrets that Pedro had previously learned by cleverly "pumping" other persons. Besides this, he gave performances of his puppet-show. The way Cervantes introduces Maese Pedro into his story—without betraying his identity by a syllable—is delightfully graphic:

Meanwhile there entered the tavern door a man clad all in chamois-skin, stockings, breeches and doublet, and cried aloud: "Hey, Landlord! have you housing? For the soothsaying monkey and the Play of the Liberation of Melisandra are coming."

"Devil take you!" cried the landlord, "here's Maese Pedro himself! Now we shall have a jolly evening."

One thing more must not be forgotten [continues Cervantes], namely, that this Maese Pedro had covered his left eye and almost half the cheek with a green plaster, so that one saw that on this side he must have some hurt. (In the sequel Cervantes explains that the plaster served Gines merely as a disguise.) The landlord went on thus: "Ah, a thousand times welcome, worthy Maese Pedro! Where is the monkey, and where the play?"

In the course of the chapter Pedro, after doing his "stunt" with the monkey, sets up his puppet-theatre before the public,

present among whom are Don Quixote and Sancho Pansa; it is surrounded on all sides by burning wax candles to make the stage distinct and brilliant. Maese Pedro then steps in behind it, to do his part in guiding the puppets; in front a youth takes his stand to act as announcer and expositor of the mysteries of the play. In his hand he holds a wand wherewith to point out the characters as they appear.—All now being assembled in the tavern, the Announcer began to tell of what (as Cervantes expresses himself) "he will hear and see who shall hear and see the following chapter." This is the precise point from which Falla's work leads off. Falla presents a stage on the stage. On this "minor stage" (as we should like to call it) little puppets perform the Story of Melisandra in faithful imitation of its portrayal by Cervantes. The characters are Charlemagne, Don Gayferos, Don Roldán, Melisandra, King Marsilio, and the love-smitten Moor. On the "major stage" appear to heighten the confusion, as singing puppets of a larger growth, Don Quixote (bass or baritone), Maese Pedro (tenor), the Announcer (boy-soprano), besides (as pantomimists) Sancho Pansa, the Landlord, and a few secondary figures. Concerning the musical interpretation of the three principal parts Falla gives these directions:

The part of Don Quixote should be sung with a sense of nobility and dignity which partakes equally of the sublime and ridiculous, while the interpretation of all the marks of expression in the music should be exaggerated down to the smallest detail. The proper performance of the part demands a voice which is nervous and energetic as well as rich in tone and flexible in expression.

In the part of Master Peter, the singer should try to avoid all excess of lyrical feeling. On the other hand, he should cultivate the greatest possible clearness and vivacity of musical diction, within the range of vocal colour demanded by each situation of the drama. There should be no attempt at buffoonery; but the roguish and ironical disposition of the character should be conveyed by a decidedly comic manner.

The part of the Boy demands a voice which is nasal and rather forced—the voice of a boy shouting on the street, rough in expression and exempt from all lyrical feeling. It should be sung by a boy-soprano; but when this is not possible, a woman's voice may be used which will imitate the characteristic vocal quality and the kind of expression mentioned above.

The orchestra consists of only twenty players (including nine wind-instruments and eight strings, harp, cymbals and percussion). But also the singers of the three major-puppet parts are ranged with the orchestra! This makes it difficult to get a clear impression of the action, and for that reason it would be better to dispense with the major puppets and let real singers

act and sing on the large stage. Before writing this score, Falla made an intensive study of Castilian folk-music as it was in Cervantes' time, and then sought to reproduce it with modern resources. Hence the singular mannerism of the musical setting. The work starts in this vein with an Introduction entitled *El Pregón* (The Proclamation). After a few measures the curtain rises, and Maese Pedro in the tone of a professional "barker" invites the ladies and gents to take a look at the theatre where "The Liberation of Melisandra" is to be played. Enter the characters of the "major theatre," among them Don Quixote, while the orchestra plays what we may call the overture to the puppet-play, *La Sinfonia de Maese Pedro*, as Cervantes directs, with the utmost gravity. Maese Pedro now having solicited the heedful attention of the audience, his Announcer comes forward and, in singsong fashion, sets forth without musical accompaniment and literally following Cervantes (with trifling omissions) the plot of the puppet-play. (In fact, the entire text of the play was borrowed from Cervantes; cf. Chapter XXVI.)



(Spanish text: "Esta verdadera historia que aquí á vuestras mercedes se representa, es sacada de las Crónicas francesas y de las Romances españoles que andan en boca de las gentes.")

(Translation: "This most true and tragic history, that now is represented unto your worships, has been taken word for word out of French chronicles, and from Castilian romances."—English version based on Shelton's "Don Quixote" of 1620 by I. B. Trend.—This monotonous patter is repeated over and over again.)

Just here a great difficulty is met with. In Sevilla the celebrated *Seises* (choirboys of the cathedral) could be enlisted, for they were traditionally instructed in this style. In Paris, at the stage première, Falla saw himself obliged to divide this part, half of it being sung by a boy, and the other half by a young girl. This rendered the action still more incomprehensible.

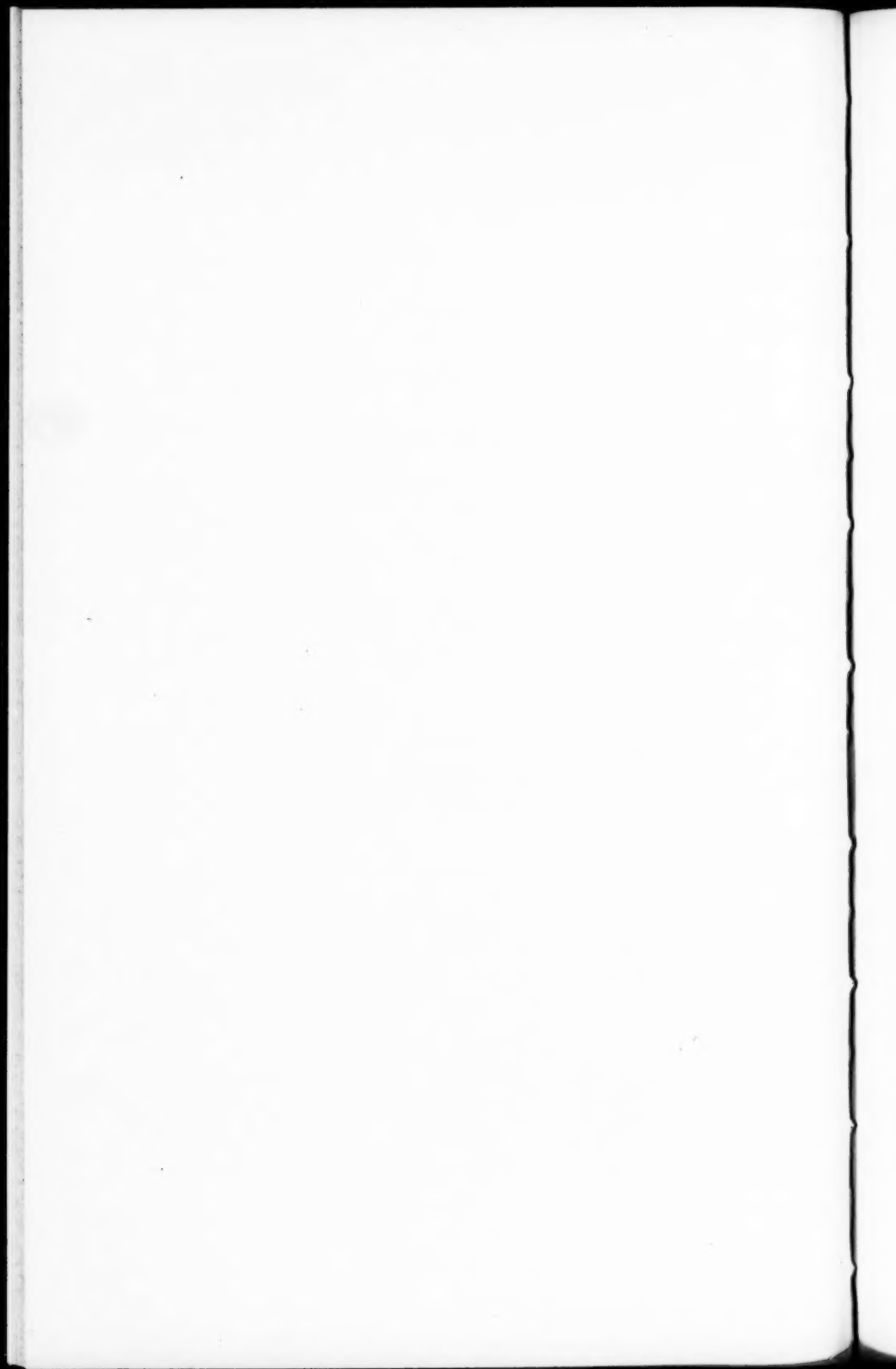
Mozz.

Handwritten musical score for three staves, labeled "Ch.", "C.", and "C.I.". The music is in 4/4 time and features complex rhythmic patterns, including triplets and sixteenth notes. The notation is in a key with one sharp (F#) and includes dynamic markings such as *f* (forte) and *ff* (fortissimo). The word "Hempre" is written below the first staff.

"Retello"

Mannuel de Falla

1-26



Scene 1: The court of Charlemagne, in Paris. The Announcer's singsong patter again tells what is to be seen. Don Gayferos, Melisandra's spouse, plays chess with Roland (Roldán). Charlemagne, his father-in-law, vehemently reproaches him for his inactivity. Gayferos springs up in a rage and begs Roland to lend him his famous sword, which the latter refuses, offering his aid instead. But Gayferos thinks that he alone is capable of liberating his wife, Melisandra, from the toils of the Moor. The most effective number musically is the entrance of Charlemagne (*Moderato e pomposo*) in the style of a Galliard. Here the Announcer's voice falls in to explain

Scene 2: It is laid in Alcazar de Sansuela (Sargossa). Melisandra is discovered on a beam, dreamily gazing into the distance. Presently the Moorish King, Marsillo, enters behind her back and watches her. Musically this scene is founded on an Old Spanish ballad-theme artistically varied by Falla. The Announcer narrates that Melisandra was abducted by a Moor, who stole a kiss from her and now, by order of the King, must pay the penalty.

Scene 3: The Moor's punishment. This interpolated scene is based, strangely enough, on a folk-song-like Castilian children's song, carried on over a *basso-ostinato*.—Again the Announcer's voice breaks in to explain

Scene 4: The Pyrenees. Don Gayferos on horseback following a winding path. The music keeps on in the rhythm of hoofbeats. The Announcer describes

Scene 5: The flight of Gayferos with Melisandra, whom he has meantime discovered, to Paris. Pedro intervenes, as he did once before, to admonish the boy to go on with his story without affectation.

Scene 6: For the last time, the scene changes; we see, as the Announcer describes it, the Square in Sansuena, where King Marsillo is rallying his troops for the pursuit. When the boy tells how the bells of the mosques were ringing, Don Quixote objects that this is nonsense, for there are no bells in the mosques. Pedro tranquillizes him by remarking that it was merely a poetic license; and the Announcer continues with a description of the preparation for the pursuit.

Finale: Don Quixote, who takes everything in earnest, rushes at the puppet-stage to lend the fleeing pair assistance against the Moors. He throws show and all into dire confusion, despite Pedro's protests (here Falla quaintly introduces a Catalan Christmas song). Then follows a hymn by Don Quixote in praise of

Dulcinea; and finally—the most effective number in the work—a song in praise of the knights-errant. The singular interval-leaps (ninths and elevenths) lend this song a grotesque effect. The close is splendid:

Tempo, ma poco meno mosso
stacc. marc.

Vi - va, vi - va lea - dan - te ca - ba - lle - ri - a

marc. sempre *pesante*

so - bre to - das las co - sas que hoy vi - ven en la

sempre pesante

poco rit. *Tempo 1^o*
tie - - - rra! etc.

energico etc.

(Spanish text: "Viva, viva la andante caballeria sobre todas las cosas que hoy viven en la tierra!")

(Translation: Long live Knighthood, and long the name of Knight-Errant above all the professions in all the wide world!)

In summing up I should like to say that it is extremely difficult to judge of a work intended for stage-performance after hearing one concert-performance and studying the piano-reduction.

In spite of this, and with full recognition of the musical master-ship here and elsewhere displayed by Falla, I feel justified in saying that the work did not spring from a happy conception and could, therefore, hardly find such realization as its creator had in mind. From a purely musical standpoint, too, it wearies the hearer by its monotonous coloration and drab orchestration, and the interminable patter of the luckless choirboy. Furthermore, in Cervantes the whole puppet-play is conceived as the jest of a thorough-paced rogue, of whose jests Don Quixote is the victim. Maese Pedro, alias Ginesillo, belongs to the tribe of Till Eulenspiegel; but in Falla's music one seeks in vain for a spark of the wit of that jovial knave. Here everything is constructed with a seriousness and ponderousness that assuredly does not respond to what Cervantes conceived as the spirit of this puppet-play. And yet this work was composed in special honor of Cervantes, and its first stage-production took place on June 25, 1923, in the salon of Princess Polignac at Paris, as a private performance, it having been already given a public concert-performance on March 23 of that year in Sevilla.

It is well worth while to cast a glance over Falla's minor works, which are all piano-compositions—a piano-concerto dedicated to Wanda Landowska and (end of 1925) not yet finished—and Spanish music. From the year 1906 are the *Pièces Espagnoles* (A. Durand & Fils) dedicated to Isaac Albeniz and still closely following that master's style, but very pretty in their way. The fourth piece, *Andaluza*, is particularly characteristic. Also deserving of mention is the *Fantasia Baetica* ("Provincia Baetica" was the Roman name for Andalusia), written eleven years later and dedicated to Artur Rubinstein (Chester). In this music we already find Falla's full individuality, which is remote enough, of a truth, from what passes for "Spanish" in other countries. The "Intermezzo" of the *Fantasia* is appended as a sample:



Finally, there is a very impressionistic work for piano and orchestra, *Noches en los Jardines de España* (Nights in Spanish Gardens),

in three movements: "In the Generalife" [palace and gardens of the Moorish kings at Granada], "Distant Dance," "In the Gardens of the Sierra of Cordoba." (Max Eschig.) In these, again there is a specifically "Spanish" monotony attuned to the landscape and finding expression in the continual repetition of single phrases. This peculiar feature Falla learned from the folk-dances, as imitated, for instance, at the beginning of his "Distant Dance":

Allegretto giusto

pp *poco* *p* *dim.*

pp marc *pp sempre*

leggerissimo

p *etc.* *etc.*

Thus may the dance-tunes of the *Gitanos* reëcho from the cliffs of the Sacromonte, when Falla sojourns in his countryhouse on the Alhambra.

"Every night, when I go to bed," once said Falla, "new ideas and plans beset me, and with each of these ideas I might reconstitute my technique; but such reconstitution would only emphasize my individuality, only present it in a new aspect. To repeat one's self!—there lies the danger; old age, academicism. To renew one's self—that is the secret. Unity at the foundation, variety in the aspects." (*Unidad de fondo y pluralidad de aspectos.*)

Happy the artist who can say of himself that he is ever new, ever youthful, and withal ever the same. For Falla let us wish that he may continue to create in this spirit.

(Translated by Theodore Baker.)

THE RÔLE OF AFFECTATION IN MUSIC

By G. CHITTENDEN TURNER

THERE is a kind of affectation that feeds upon standards, and another kind that subsists by defying them. Music has always suffered from both species.

Affectation of styles has been common to all the arts, and, since conformity and imitation are necessary to a certain extent in every field of expression, it is difficult to arraign affectation, however it may abound as an elusive parasite preying upon the accumulated store of art beautiful.

In vain has the young composer been counseled to be sincere, for the very process of standardization and the demands of intelligibility have made him an imitator. The age-old admonition has, in fact, driven thousands of writers into the swamp where metaphysical vaporings and unsound logic have spelled obscurity, till the lyric enchantments of old, like the glory that was Greece, have faded in the fogs of a new egotism.

To-day the composer plies his pen between the devil of archaic form and the deep sea of uncharted ultraism. Where is the safe middle-ground? How can he escape the charge of affectation anywhere? Must we leave him in his blushes straining at a gnat? Left to work out his salvation in this narrow strip of tide-washed shore, perhaps indeed he will locate the rock upon which to build his future house, immune from wind and wave. Since the hermit finds virtue in isolation, and hunger fans the spark of genius, will he discover this middle-ground to be so unsafe after all? Out of struggle comes enlightenment and growth.

One finds it expedient to write for a living as well as to contribute lasting works of art. In order to give one's writings commercial value, the urge to adopt two or three prevailing types of published compositions is fairly vital, and, while this may not offset renown, these imitated types, more salable and less original as they are, offer little promise of eventual fame. The great pathfinders in music were not commercial writers for the most part, and to-day we witness numerous efforts to solve the question of maintaining genius and giving it untrammelled expression.

Affectation seems a deep-rooted thing, and assuredly in more than one way a bane to art standards. All is affectation that is

not sincere. We observe the plagiarist occasionally fêted at court and the clever gonoph turning out "big sellers," and we feel a sort of holy horror about it. We righteously deplore the gullibility of the public that falls for stolen trash; then wonder if, after all, the wheels of activity do not receive their greatest impetus from commercialized imitation, be its sponsors ever so insincere and inartistic.

But the truth of it is that even the commercialized individual is dependent upon fine art standards, though he exploits them much in the spirit that would employ Niagara Falls for factory power; and although the majority of composers are idealists and not iconoclasts by nature, the defense of recognized art is ever timely. The rôle of affectation, like all artificiality, must be conceded. Imitation in art, as in habits of dress and manners, has developed our standards and made safe the precedent of genius. Law is stabilized by repetition. The orator may capture his audience by the same phrases and gestures used by Webster or Demosthenes, and still no one may declare him guilty of affectation, unless he borrows to the exclusion of his own personality. One might aver, in fact, that all art partakes of affectation, where the slightest self-consciousness or compliance with accustomed forms occurs. The mannerisms of famous singers and actors have been handed down for generations and given strength to many a weak exponent. We cannot altogether condemn affectation, especially when in time it becomes a part of the personality of the imitator; but the most highly endowed persons, once out of swaddling clothes, justly regard borrowed plumage as a handicap to their own expressiveness—as an admission of weakness.

The problem of the composer in to-day's upheaval of styles is extraordinarily severe, whether he seeks to ally himself with profound standards and over-written methods, or, on the other hand, casts in his lot with immature and transitional forms. A large percentage of writers avoid extremes of style, seeking to combine the best of that which is well-established with such interesting innovations as are afforded by modern license. The process of composing is inevitably mechanical, and as truly as without technique we usually encounter unrefinement of uttered sentiment, without conformity and synthesis we find a poor substitute for art. In the sum total of submitted compositions affectation is a prevailing weakness, and it is traceable to meager equipment; but the curse also rests heavily on the shoulders of the most erudite of writers. Intrinsic force and poetic charm are only seldom the companions of originality, and almost never the attributes of an imitated style.

Undoubtedly we are setting a hard task for the composer, whose subconscious memory continues to evoke familiar phrases and who instinctively follows the accustomed emotional rise and fall of speech, serving as they do the double purpose of clarifying every mode and denuding it of originality. Thus, again, the very nature of the universal language demands imitation and invites affectation, and it therefore takes a sturdy writer to leave an indelible mark on the parchment of time.

The inherited weaknesses of written music include certain deteriorated values, which, once strong and impressive, to-day are an encumbrance and a liability. Use of these outworn phrases, figures, and harmonies, in the sense formerly acceptable, now often constitutes glaring affectation. If one now attempted to propose marriage to a lady in the language of Shakespeare, not only would the effect be ludicrous, but the lady would probably refuse. A marble-topped table or a grandfather clock on a bungalow porch amid chintz-covered wicker furniture might prove a comfort to some dear, provincial hearts, but it would be decidedly depressing to a discriminating person. Providence has left a large, appropriate place for antiques—usually where stately seclusion and memory-haunting shadows bid them welcome. It is because there is dignity in old age and a soothing mellowness that time alone supplies, especially evoking propriety in its behalf. We do not care to see greybeards at the ball. However customs may change, the fundamental principles of esthetic beauty must remain as the unvarying reflection of idealism and saneness. The lover-knight once expressed his passion by means of a fervent and frequently solemn ode; then, in time, pyramidal cadenzas were deemed the proper medium; still later, a series of lugubrious sixths and labyrinthine transitions tugged at the heart-strings; and now a dramatic *tour de force*, an augmented fifth or a metaphysical thirteenth, speeds Cupid's shaft. But style in art has seldom strayed far from sobriety, at least for a long period of time.

Where the lesson of artistic propriety has never been learned, and a sense of the fitness of things (be it in realism or fancy) never acquired, affectation inevitably dwells in that house. Hence, without thorough technical training, the most inspired genius is unable to avoid the pitfalls left by rotting vegetation. His themes, furthermore, may be brilliant, even noble, but their effective development depends upon that art which offers serviceable conformity, whose laws will outlast the ultimate musical vagrant. As for the absolute technician—let us specify the familiar antithesis—whose inspiration floats among the visions of more melodious

spirits, he is often the chief of borrowers, on whose door the mark of affectation is read by every passer-by. His footprint is on every famous doormat. But (one objects) should he be persecuted? There are evidences that he feels, as well as feels for, that which he writes. Should we condemn him as insincere and affected? What if his melodies are reminiscent and his novel harmonization and rhythm suggestive of the influence of Smith or Jones, perhaps both of them? Why accuse him of affectation, when art itself is made up so largely of this very substance; when, for the sake of protection, Nature has made us imitators; when the compass of the scale is so limited? The case for the defense impresses us, and at the outset we are prone to admit that if our technical borrower's vogue transcends that of Smith and Jones, the puritanical brickbat will be left as ammunition for envious rivals. But history is not full of such cases, whether we consider Händel properly or improperly inspired. If we were championing utility and income, rather than their foundation and sponsor, art, the missile would be hidden in a basket of roses. Since we are primarily concerned with that previously bandied term "standards," we profess little sympathy for the borrower, be he ever so adroit and entertaining. Dollars can be paid back, but not ideas. However, for the present we are content to base our charges on affectation.

When it comes to interpretation, affectation exhibits a very different aspect. It is less to be feared in this field, because it does not worry at the roots of art, although, indeed, if the exponent be faulty, the written art is helpless. Did affectation assume relatively such proportions in this realm as in the other, and were it able to thrive so independently, we might well abandon hope. But here the propriety of imitation rests on a different footing. The weight of personality thrown into the scale alters responsibility. The rôle of affectation is now played without make-up or disguise. While the composer was secret about it, the singer, instrumentalist, and conductor, irrespective of their training, employ their artifices in the open. Such affectation of tone, enunciation, phrasing, manner, or dress, as can be gracefully assimilated, and makes for strength, is but a part of the artist's education and coaching, and, as said before, if it becomes in time a part of the personality, it is to be encouraged, providing the adoption of other modes does not blanket a greater personality. This, incidentally, touches the greatest problem in all education.

Where the interpreter sins chiefly by way of affectation is in blindly following accepted styles and versions without fully applying himself to the study of text and content. His eloquence is

usually three-fourths borrowed, supposing him to obey, as he doubtless should, marks of expression. The conscious producing of effects and the attention to detail, which seem superficially so opposed to broad treatment and impassioned style, are nevertheless of the essence of artistry, and the "finished" interpretation usually depends thereupon. The less affected the individual, the more likely he is to devote himself to mastering the message of the text; the more he is content with surface values and ostentation, the more willing he to emulate his betters with a minimum of hard work. In hitching one's wagon to a star, either the luminary or the vehicle should be well measured.

Like the salesman who sells his goods because he believes in their value and is thus able to make his prospects share his enthusiasm, the great singer or player has won his way through his sincerity and the strength of his convictions. His technique is secondary. When sincerity and spirit are controlled by method they are more irresistible than when unconfined and rampant. Therefore, that same problem recognized as the composer's now becomes the interpreter's, namely: self-expression and conformity. Scylla and Charybdis become less formidable, for the interpreter has momentum and his balance is easily adjusted. But the passage is nevertheless a narrow one.

There is something pardonable about affectation when it indicates that, despite limitations, the individual is reaching out for something better. It is difficult to arraign the entire music-loving public, the supporting patronage, upon which, nominally at any rate, art-music relies for its existence. The affectation of appreciation, following that of composition and interpretation, is a matter for heavenly adjustment. The affected patron offsets the scoffer, and unless his pretense of understanding art results in his losing the sense of comparison, or develops some kind of atrophy, he cannot be regarded as the great silent peril—and then only to himself. Where it develops to the point of lavishing attention, praise and money upon bad art, then it becomes an irritant and a source of discouragement to much capable effort.

To what degree affectation abounds in our audiences to-day is easily conjectured, but we are obliged to make great allowance for the play of music on the emotions. The unversed, unpretentious listener reacts to inartistic music; the crudest melody and harmonies, the stalest jingle, fill him with joy, and we know that his appreciation is the most genuine thing in the world, even if it has nothing to do with the appraisal of art. The fashionable pretender, on the other hand, the exemplary concert-goer, whose

name adorns many a list of patrons, and who, perhaps, in the long run does more good than harm, merely reminds us of the philanthropist who gives a dollar to the elevator man but hurries by the starving man on the steps outside. His is a world of example—fashionable conformity—and often by some curious trick of Fate he manages to help a worthy cause.

Even superficial interest, ostentation and poor taste are better than total unconcern. The affectation of appreciation is one kind of tribute to art. Its place is as permanent as vanity itself, and any slight possible amelioration can be expected only through devious cultural developments.

This is not true of the trait under discussion as it is observed in music, where reflected light is unnecessary to clarify the situation. The difficulty is that the light should never be permitted to grow dim, as it has regrettably become in these days of extraordinarily artificial effects. With the advent of startling changes comes always a large generation of precocious imitators, who shoot far beyond the mark for a while, then seek a surer vantage point. Despite their claims for originality and unaffectedness, the ultra-moderns must forever be reckoned among the greatest offenders in affectation. Impersonal descriptive music, normally the purest, in their language now shows affectation of the most preposterous kind, in fact little short of inanity. Romantic music, for centuries in the throes of hyperbole, in their tender keeping has become seismic, inarticulate, maniacal. At last the millenium! Affectation is gone; only putrefaction remains. It seems a harsh, brief invective, considering how much might be said of the art-mangling process and its relation to pretense and disorder in a gentler, broader-minded way, but after many years of absorbing and mostly insincere experiment by the extremists it seems that really little has been accomplished except to annoy lovers of art beautiful.

In church music, where profound sincerity would naturally be expected, we have had about fifty years of sentimentality, as applying to the majority of used anthems and cantatas. Like the average concert song, its affectation is characterized by shallow conception. In opera, affectation where it occurs is stylistic, as in florid music, but its stimuli vary. In the former, artifice is directed toward ingenious effects, novelty, which is undoubtedly excellent judgment, so far as it goes. In the latter, embellishments are written in a practical fashion for the obvious purpose of displaying the technique of the performer, and are in no way prejudicial to more intense and literal composition. Here the object is brilliancy rather than novelty, constituting a species of candid affectation or

flourish. Its only apparent claim to sincerity is by deference to style and treatment.

In popular music, where plagiarism is conducted and approved along extensive lines, there is nevertheless a vast amount of really unaffected music, and, like all music which has striven to impress the heart rather than the head, except that of the exaggerated romantic type, its straightforwardness has sounded a clear note. In sentimental passages is found much naïve affectation, but minus the deception incurred in more ambitious musical forms. As for the plagiarism itself, it is too monstrous for analysis; one might as well declare a highwayman an affected fellow.

Sentimentality, defined as the affectation of a fine feeling, has caught at the vitals of music, and much of the modern library of song and instrumental music has become afflicted with grandiloquence and exaggerated emphasis. The Wagnerian blessings have flowed profusely. Thanks mainly to the operatic passion, the fabric of musical art stands somewhat in need of an asbestos lining. Thunderbolts have fallen where roses twine, while sulphurous fumes are emitted from the very elixirs of Olympus. We may well inquire if it is merely affectation or dejection. The inference is not intended for the ultra-moderns closeted in their own inferno, but to the soaring sentimentalists who believe in mawkish sevenths and baptism by immersion.

When, whether in devotion to convention or in defiance of it, one declines to sound one's own depths and accordingly embarks on a policy of affectation, studying effects with all the minutiae of technique at the sacrifice of vitality, lasting achievement in art is likely to suffer. The greatest progress in music must be made where slow growth is already marked, on the sure, long constructed roadways, where the plain white milestones of sincerity are clearly visible. Incidentally, it is more worthy and skilful to be original through the employment of known, familiar terms, than by speaking a mystical jargon that satisfies no honest love of art.

As for the sober mortals who are conscious of the pitfalls and try to avoid aping their betters and the faddists, theirs is a sportsmanlike attitude, and in them is the kind of stuff that kindles the stars. Perhaps, after all is said and done, in that narrow strip of sand between high and low tide, which the English common law long ago decreed as belonging to the people, lies the solid rock upon which to-morrow's composer may build his house. The spontaneous melody of the folk-song, least affected and best loved of all music, was not written for money or for fame. It came like the bird's song, straight from the heart. Its writer was forgotten

long ago—this giver of rare messages of joy and sorrow—but his work has lived among the most precious inheritance of art. Because it was natural and simple it has served a great purpose. Now, centuries later, new ideas, themes and modes have added their complex forces; still the pure old folk-songs, with their soul-satisfying melodies, hold their own—a mighty bulwark against the tides of affectation. We know that they will never lose their place; perhaps we wistfully realize that they can never be replaced.

In to-day's musical babble are heard many sincere voices. They belong to the writers who are not lured by pretense and passing vogue, who still speak the language of the people. Occasionally is heard an eloquence that seems to promise a future seat among the immortals. But the majority of those whose utterances are familiar now will be practically forgotten by another generation. Even chance and occasion cannot bestow greatness upon them, because theirs was not an imperishable quality—it was mostly affectation. The imitator may find his market quickly, but it seldom long survives the activity of his pen. The inventor, the honest, fearless originator, struggles hard for recognition, which, once attained, is not likely to be withdrawn.

THE AMENITIES OF DUET-PLAYING

By ERNEST BRENNECKE, JR.

A SIGHT of the frayed terra-cotta covers of Gustav Damm's *Piano-Schule* to-day brings back to me exquisite memories, both dreadful and delightful. Thousands of my contemporaries, I am sure, would share these reactions with me. How that stout, pedantic instruction-book gnawed its bitter way into our boyhood and girlhood lives, some twenty or thirty years ago! Times have changed rapidly, however: we may have noticed how the sciences of pedagogy and psychology have advanced; how they have invaded even the tight little domain of elementary pianoforte instruction, threatening to inundate it completely with a bewildering succession of modern labor- and tear-saving methods and systems: touch systems, pressure systems, color systems—every one of them a sugar-coated short cut to Parnassus. The children of ambitious, progressive parents, as we observe them nowadays, are only infrequently nurtured on the healthy solid fare of the school of Damm; they are amused rather with keyboard games, musical cut-out pictures, nursery jingles made both ethical and easy; they are sweetly inveigled into an almost painless inhaling of the necessary muscular dexterity, and before they know it, they are rattling off Chopin and jazz, or both intermingled, as well as the best of us.

Poor old Professor Damm! He still clings tenaciously to the affections of old-timers and traditionalists, and yet guides the destinies of many a pupil, as I am told; every new "method" must still reckon with his book as with a still active, hard-dying competitor;—but surely his vogue, with that of the Liszt-pupil, is waning inevitably, year by year. Up-to-the-minute, high-pressure, psychological educationalists are content to watch Damm's Piano School melt sadly into an eventual oblivion, even as they view with equal complacency the simultaneous rise and flourish of correspondence schools which will (so their advertisements tell us) bring hours of beautiful, inspiring, entertaining music into any home, any heart, any fingers, for the modest price of ten or twenty mail-order lessons.

Damm never really became an audible swear-word with us, for most of us who were compelled to toil before a clavier-keyboard

were well-brought-up children. We often loathed the sight of him, nevertheless; we dreaded those endless *Tonleitern*; we became gradually convinced that we should never master even "the correct position of the hand"; few of us, indeed, ever got as far as the last page and filed away the volume with the glowing sense of a weighty pendant milestone at last cut away from our necks. If we were healthy kids, we looked upon our daily hour with Herr Damm as unalloyed agony, what with thoughts of tops spinning, and skates rolling, and firecrackers shooting happily, just outside our conservatory-windows.

And yet, at this distance, one cannot quite consider without a faint undertone of regret the fated decline of that severe discipline at least in the exercise of the precious virtues of patience and persistence. Time and adversity soften the recollection of childish woes, and retrospect even transfigures them fallaciously into joys. Our sportsmanship, besides, makes us hesitate to hack and kick at poor old Damm, to exorcise his stern ancient spirit, now that he has to struggle against growing odds for his very existence, much as we should have liked to do so in days when such action would have afforded us a gleeful indulgence in *lèse-majesté*—or worse, *Majestätsbeleidigung*! On the other hand, I am resolved to grant no leeway to sentiment: I shall not embrace the old boy affectionately and with prodigal-filial tears. I have revived him here just for a moment, only to give him exactly what he deserves from me—for he did provide me with at least one instant of pure and keen delight, with one elevation of the horizon (to use Pater's idea) that seemed for an instant to set free the soul and to unfold a vista of enticing, fresh sense-impressions.

It happened on that day, in my tenth year, when I had at last overcome the thorny difficulties of the tune *Kuk-kuk! Kuk-kuk! Ruft aus dem Wald*. Thrice had I played that charming little cuckoo-melody, hands together, high up in the treble clef, without error. The music bore the subtitle *Primo (Schüler)*; on the opposite leaf danced highly complicated figures and notes: *Secondo (Lehrer)*.

My father entered the room; seated himself at my left.

"Play it again," he said.

I did so; he added Damm's harmonies and figurations in the bass. And what a sudden, overpowering access of richness! How that simple strain was carried aloft, transfigured by its colorful, sweeping and striding support! In my naïf joy, under that dazzling thrill of the nerves, my fingers almost forgot their part, almost failed to sing along, and had to be recalled to their duties

to the ensemble. There, in addition to the apprehension of surprising delectations, there rested the second source of delight: the sense of participation and fellowship, intellectual and emotional, of union with another's purposes and achievements, of contribution to a joint enterprise, of the reaping of a reward that exceeded manyfold one's outlay and deserts. My first attendance at a symphony concert, and at the opera (the former featuring Beethoven and the latter being *Aida*), thrilling as these experiences necessarily were, yielded nothing to compare with this first immersion into the wonders of duet-playing. But these first wonders were not destined to last.

Years went by, as balladists sing; callow years necessarily, years of study and of rank development; taste followed tardily and hesitantly after badly tempered enthusiasms of all kinds. A false, if natural, sophistication was begotten by a smattering of the musical classics (so called), picked up in haphazard fashion and without the sterner guidance that had controlled my nonage. That sophistication, the pride of my pubertal period, bred in me a disagreeable and snuffy disdain for many manifestations of humbler efforts at self-expression in art, even when such efforts happened to be really far sincerer than my own.

In particular, I had taught myself to despise the very idea of four-handed performances at the piano. My nose-tilting at this then popular form of diversion was surely justifiable—to some extent, at least. Consider what it meant. Consider, first of all, its usual form of assault upon the eye: two young *Backfische* at a parentally superintended "party"—or rather, two quite unlovely seated female rear elevations, before the mission-oak upright sarcophagus, visibly panting, visibly toiling, eager to finish their task to the satisfaction of their buxom mammas, so that they might again be permitted to join the rest of us in our ice-cream and lemonade, and so that the games and the shrieking and the squabbling might go on once more. Furthermore, the audible effect: chords dropping and bumping down, head first or tail first, seeming always to hurt themselves, never to achieve simultaneity, yet ever rising stiffly in pain again—to fall again, still more awkwardly. Even the audible metronomic counting: "One, two-and-three, four-and . . ." seldom improved the result; never brought about the desired precision. . . .

Why go on with this nauseating description? The unhappy experience is familiar to us all. Lucky the fellow who has survived it still a music-lover! When I think of it, when I picture May and Bertha (now luckily married, dear souls, and devoted

to radio and victrola), and the *Poet and Peasant Overture*, I begin to marvel at my audacity in attempting to execute an apology for the continued or revived practice of duet-playing. But I must courageously bear witness that I was myself reconverted, by degrees; and now perhaps I may assist in the conversion of others, even of persons of discrimination along the promenades sacred to devotees of the nine Olympian maids.

My reaction (happily still lasting, still progressing) dates from the instant that I discovered Papa Haydn's *Il Maestro e lo Scolare*. It was a chance encounter. It was after a good dinner, and my mood was not so severe as usual. With a gifted brother I played through those funny stilted variations, the scholar in the treble imitating, with delicious simian grimaces, each added twiddle in the Master's part, which kept piling one archaic ornament upon the other until the whole thing became irresistibly uproarious. Good solid music it was, too, displaying certain rigid formal beauties and a seemingly inexhaustible fund of invention, both melodic and comic. In its mock-serious vein of gaiety it knocked sky-high even such an old favorite as Gounod's *Funeral March of a Marionette*. Here was indeed a potent urge towards the renascence of my childhood's delight in the *Kuk-kuk* duet. Something of that delight had visited me again, and I was properly thankful. It was, moreover, a rather purified revisitation, intellectualised as it was by its added sprays of engaging humor.

My jejune prejudice now fairly broken through, I cast aside all restraint and plunged into such duets as abounded in the anthologies. My brother, ready for anything, joined me with glee. We attacked *The Antelope Hunt* by one A. Calvini, improvising nonsense-words (including "Nati-nati-nati-nati booms-fallara!") to sing to its beer-gardenish liveliness; we rocked the piano with Sousa's *Under the Double Eagle* and with Elgar's *Pomp and Circumstance*; we butchered endless rollicking, oom-pah-ing things that we called "Hungarian zoolahs"—in short, I confess that our repertoire was that of a crimson and gold uniformed marine band at Coney Island, at the Crystal Palace, London, at the Café Vaterland, Berlin, or at the Prater, Vienna. It was all great fun—for us, if not for our neighbors. May and Bertha would have delighted to see us then—ah, shame on us! Somehow it had become possible to enjoy compositions of this calibre "in harness"; they would have been impossibly banal to a single, lone performer who retained any respect for wholesome musical pabulum.

I record this episode chiefly because of my autohistorical obligations; I do not present it for emulation by others. It was

a stage, merely, in my progress towards something really commendable. Certainly it was, in itself, rather dreadful for any possible listeners; one had to become hardened to people's significantly closing all the doors upon one, that being the ultimate speechless comment of our shamefully outraged father.

All this, welcome and invigorating as it was after a fairly consistent application to my struggles with more exacting solo-pieces (not always successful struggles), really opened the way to enjoyments of great worth; for one could not, after all, remain addicted long to such fare. Soon we hit upon good bits—and in retailing these I come presently to the realities of my subject. Henceforth an invitation to imitate can safely be appended to each of my experiences; and so I drop here the clear procession of my inconsequential personal narrative, to couch my argument in terms of art rather than in terms of myself.

I drop it also to dispose of a question which may naturally arise at this point: Why can one not taste the pleasures of ensemble playing in some more legitimate way? Why, for instance, can't one find a violinist and perform with him? Off-hand, that does sound like a more justifiable procedure, on æsthetic grounds at least.

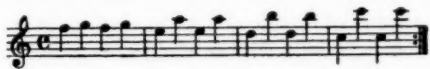
But what does the average violinist play (I am speaking throughout of the amateur-enthusiast, remember)? He, or she, is a *rara avis* who will ask one to join in the simplest movement of a Mozart sonata; rarer still is a violinist who cares to cope with the Beethoven sonatas; still scarcer one who knows the Grieg sonatas, and scarcely discoverable at all one who knows that César Franck wrote a composition in this form for violin and piano. What, then, do violinists play? Well, they play Tschaiakowsky's *Chant sans Paroles*, and Rubinstein's *Melody in F*, and Mendelssohn's *Spring Song*, and Raff's *Cavatina*, and Carl Bohm's *Cavatina*, and we must not forget Dvořák's *Humoresque*; they play, if they are particularly ambitious, the dances of Pablo de Sarasate, of Henri Vieuxtemps, of Charles de Bériot; only if you are exceedingly lucky, as well as good at persuasion, can you get them to try a Bach sarabande or gavotte; or occasionally they may "oblige" with an arrangement of Schubert's *Ständchen* or of his *Ave Maria*.

Now it is true that a great deal of this is music; some of it is even first-rate music, in spite of its being played and heard altogether too much. But where is the fun for the poor chap who sacrifices himself to the piano part? He is a mere accompanist; he has joined that curious and rather pitiable class of performers who are content to subordinate themselves, to ripple off a few arpeggios or to thrum a few banjo-passages *sotto voce*, while the soloist

(singer or fiddler) sways gracefully in the spotlight, dictating (not always too intelligently) the tempo and spirit of the whole show. Finally, he may be permitted to join in the applause for the protagonist; may even receive a mild compliment on the "adequacy" of his "support." No, there isn't too much fun in this sort of thing; not, at any rate, for the pianist who is eager and adventuresome.

Circumstances help the fellow who looks for a piano-playing partner, however. Respectable and modest amateur pianists are far easier to hunt out; there are more of them around, in any neighborhood. Find one, and you have found a source of infinite sport. But even if you can't find a respectable player, a bad one will do, if you handle him properly. Even a person who never touched a keyboard in his life will do—really! He will do, at any rate, for the first two of my more fruitful experiments.

My Exhibit A is a book usually called the Russian Paraphrases. It is bizarre caviar, compounded by a whole group of Muscovite composers as a set of exercises in ingenuity. The thing happened around the year 1875, when self-consciousness, "nationalism" and "local color" had just taken firm hold on the established leaders of the Russian school. They were filled with quaint notions of all kinds. I think Borodin was responsible for this one; at all events it was carried out by the whole clique with great gusto. Each one of them took a little nonsense-tune of the "chop-sticks" variety, imagined its being tinkled off endlessly high up in the right-hand reaches of the keyboard, and composed a piece, or a set of pieces, to be played together with it, by a more or less skilled performer. Now anyone, "musical" or unmusical, can be persuaded and taught, in five minutes, to play these chop-sticks with his two forefingers, and to keep on playing them until told to stop. They are simply a wedge-shaped theme:



Harmonising marvelously with it, one finds in the Paraphrases a succession of variations, mazurkas, cradle-songs, polonaises, dirges, waltzes, military marches, funeral marches, minuetts, preludes, nocturnes, galops, fugues, polkas, études and ballades—by Borodin, Liadoff, Rimsky-Korsakoff, César Cui and Stecherbatcheff. All of the pieces are dexterous *hors d'œuvres*, entertaining by reason of the very childish novelty of the idea—the sort of thing that will amuse any mixed tea-party. Some are devilishly clever, a few are

profoundly expressive of quite real emotions; and in these latter, the chop-sticks are so beautifully absorbed into their strange and exotic harmonic texture that one completely forgets the jingling puerility of the motif. For the second edition, published in 1880 and dedicated *aux petites pianistes capables d'exécuter le thème avec un doigt de chaque main*, Franz Liszt sent on from Weimar an additional variation; a facsimile of the manuscript of this historical contribution to *le merveilleux œuvre* (as the genial abbé called it) is reproduced in the printed version current to-day. Especially remarkable are Rimsky's fughetta on the theme B-A-C-H, his *Fugue Grotesque*, his *Carillon* for three performers, in which the subject appears in four different bell-like guises simultaneously, and Borodin's *Requiem*, with its super-solemn cadences of the orthodox Eastern church ritual: the words *Requiem æternam dona eis, Domine, et lux perpetua luceat eis* may be chanted by cavernous voices, if they are available.

A similarly happy project was more recently carried out by the pianist Leopold Godowsky. He imagined a person's ten fingers, resting on ten definite treble keys, each finger assigned to a single key and never moving away from it. Thus the primo-player's hands and arms, once fixed, remain immovable, and all he has to do is to read the notes, or simply the indicated numbers (1-5 for each hand), striking the right keys when required. The disciple who has had his interest awakened by the Paraphrases will easily master his part for the greater portion of this little scheme. Most of it is not beyond what is known as the First Grade of pianoforte proficiency. Even the secondo-parts are not usually beyond the powers of anyone who can read our current jazz with accuracy.

Godowsky called his collection *Miniatures*. There are forty-six of them in all; and they show him to be no mean composer. Working under great, if self-imposed, difficulties, he has produced an amazing variety of stuff, at least two-thirds of which will continue to give pleasure after many repetitions. There are three *Suites*, including a stunning ecclesiastical series, seven ancient dances (for gracefulness, look at the two minuets; for high spirits, at the Irish jig), seven modern dances: a Tyrolean ländler, a Hungarian csárdás à la Liszt (here we have the perfect zoolah!), a mazurka and a polonaise, both Chopinesque. Among the twenty miscellaneous numbers, the *Serenade* is the most suave, the *Pastorale* rings angelus-chimes, the *Exercise* burlesques the teacher-pupil combination by means of a stiff, self-conscious, self-satisfied accompaniment, full of trills and contrapuntal

pedagogical flub-dub. A Beethovenish *Impromptu*, "In Days of Yore," affords more than a mere glimpse of genuine, open-throated beauty; the *Scholar* is a dramatic fugue; and the marches, processional, funeral and military, live up to all possible expectations.

The Paraphrases and these Miniatures really begin at the beginning, as far as the muscular attainments of the primo-player are concerned; and because of their novelty and point, and of their evident usefulness and appeal to crowds at parties and social foregatherings of all kinds, may well prove themselves the open-sesame for many into the worlds of legitimately formed music which lie beyond them.

Slightly more conventional in structure, but full of appetising meat, are the contents of the three "Duet Books" by Angela Diller and Elizabeth Quaile (in our lewd moments we called them the Misses Killer and Jail). Especially engaging are the arrangements of old English, Irish and Scotch folk-tunes—I have never seen *Loch Lomond* or *Gathering Peascods* better done—and in the Bach *Chorales* the secondo-player can achieve an effect of uncanny grandeur by doubling the bass in the lower octave. Here again all is well within the range of a very modest finger-technique.

At this stage the long-suffering families and visiting acquaintances of the duet-perpetrators will begin to take a sneaking interest in the piquant sounds trickling through the closed doors of the salon. Perhaps that so indignantly shut door may now be judiciously opened, if it is perceived that amusement is at last taking the place of the apathetic or outraged boredom which constituted the first fruits of our efforts. Now we may perhaps be bold enough to attempt to woo listeners directly: to play for them rather than for ourselves. There are plenty of things on the delectable border-line between the tastes of the two groups to which I allude: that is to say, between salon-music of no weight whatsoever and the really massive masterpieces of the "classic" composers.

There are, for instance, Schubert's lovely waltzes, those smooth, lilting measures that Liszt felicitously called the "Soirées of Vienna"; there are the Brahms waltzes, Op. 39, a bit more gritty (you can set your teeth firmly into these, and they won't turn insipid); there are Brahms's Hungarian dances, too—the unhackneyed ones are quite as fetching as those played in movie-houses and at violin recitals. Brahms, benign old bearded bachelor that he was, wrote both of these sets for duettists, and it's up to duettists to exploit them properly. If that door has opened of itself by this time, we can add Grieg's Norwegian dances:

square-toed borean peasants these—a good foil to Brahms's alternately drunken and maudlin gipsies. These also were composed originally for four-handed performance. . . . Yes, you see, this type of amusement hasn't always been disdained by the best people . . . yes, our double-armed beastie is now beginning to sit up and take a little nourishment.

But let's forget our audiences again; we have conceded enough to them. Aroused and ambitious, we presently gird our loins to tackle the thing in earnest. In a word, we plunge headlong into the Masters: into Bach, Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven. And in deference to transcription-haters, we begin with a survey of works originally conceived for duet-production—and Mozart sends us off to a superb start.

Superb indeed are the two *Fantasias* in F-major and F-minor. They are full of the ironical sweetness, the characteristic sentiment and polish that have betrayed Wolfgang's humanly pattering heart beneath the fashionable and too expensive ruffles on his breast. They have moments also of almost tragic gravity and of a certain heavy-handed vigor which very infrequently comes to the surface in his other work. But, somehow or other, several gratuitous outbursts of this unusually raw energy have crept into the four Sonatas, the first movements of which seem especially to suffer from over-insistence and over-muscularity in the statement of their principal themes. They do not fully exploit the inimitable fragility that one always looks for in Mozart; but this, I realize, must not be accepted as valid criticism. Attributed to another hand, these sonatas would probably seem far from being muscle-bound. Their problematical shortcomings are satisfactorily redeemed by the beauty of the slow movements and by the wonderfully blithe but wistful finales. The variations in G ripple off one's fingers with plenty of delicacy, and the fugue in G-minor, in four strict parts throughout, just manages to interest us musically as well as mathematically.

We turn to Beethoven, and find him best represented by his single Duet-Sonata in D, Op. 6. Its opening measures definitely foreshadow the dominant rhythmic "Fate-motif" which seemed to haunt the composer throughout his maturity, and found its fullest expression in the Fifth Symphony and in the *Sonata Appassionata*, Op. 57. The great historical interest of this first movement overshadows its too obvious effectiveness—it is not exactly an inspired work; but the *Rondo* which follows has become famous on its own merits. The level established by the *Rondo* is nicely maintained in the two series of variations, on "Ich denke dein"

and on an amiable air by Count Waldstein; the closing pages of the latter set are especially good. If we care to pass on to the three Marches, Op. 45, we must needs grin and bear a severe disappointment: they are really abominable tripe, stodgy and soggy, thin and undernourished, for all their surface-vigor. Here the Master seems to have mislaid his Michelangelesque mantle and to have appeared (for only a few moments, luckily) as the Dr. Frank Crane of music.

When we now attempt to extend our researches farther into the great classical epoch, into that period which should really provide us with our daily bread, we find a kind of disagreeable suggestion of worminess in our loaf. For Bach, Handel and Haydn apparently wrote little or nothing for four hands. Beethoven and Mozart did, indeed, write some, as we have seen, but we may as well admit that its bulk and quality cut but a poor figure beside those of their orchestral, piano and chamber music. Perhaps these giants of a fabulously gilded religious and social age were among the first to experience the horror inspired by the machined clankings characteristic both of the player-piano and of the efforts of Bertha and May; perhaps they were too occupied with their ecclesiastical or courtly occupations to feel any sympathy for persons who revelled in oompahs—think of four-handed performances in Leipzig's Thomaskirche or in the mirrored chambers of Prince Lichnowsky!

All that we can do, then, is to make the best of whatever transcriptions are at hand. And matters are not quite so bad as might be expected, especially if we look first at the quartets of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven, which retain their freshness remarkably well under this metamorphosis; the four stringed instruments (two violins, viola and violoncello) being now represented roughly by the four hands of the duettists. Crystal-clear in their outlines, precise in their rhythms (how grateful duet-players are for this quality!), these quartets do not seem badly mangled thus. Moreover, the primo-player remembers that his left hand must generally try to imitate or suggest a stroked or plucked violin; the secondo, that his left hand is a 'cello—and thus something like the original effect can be retained in mind and projected into the performance. Here are delights for a lifetime; one can never finish playing all the classical quartets. Just take, for a start, Haydn's in F (Op. 74, No. 2), Mozart's in C (No. 6 in Peters' edition) and Beethoven's in C-minor (Op. 18, No. 4), and if you don't continue through them all, and into the quintets and trios, I will engage solemnly to weep and pray for

your musical salvation. And do let me add one impassioned supplication on behalf of a favorite: Beethoven's never-otherwise-heard Trio in C (Op. 87) "für zwei Hoboen und englisches Horn"!

With the symphonies and overtures there are greater difficulties and embarrassments. A piano can match a string quartet for variety, but it simply can not cope with the infinitely various colors of an orchestra. To play the symphonies, even the simple ones of Haydn and Mozart, at all adequately, it is really necessary to be familiar with them in all their actual kaleidoscopic glory. Then one can catch at least some of their beauties, much as a monochrome engraver can catch some of the beauties of a Botticelli, a Titian or a Turner. If one knows how Mozart's G-minor sounds under the baton of Stokowski or Mengelberg, it may be quite possible for him to produce a recognizable reflection of its stirring convolutions in our modest four-handed mirror, with the added joy of feeling that he is recreating the lovely thing for himself.

The same applies to Beethoven's famous *Fifth*, the first movement of which is the most dashing duet-warhorse that I have ever straddled; it is sure-fire—and likewise the whole of the *First*. The others require the exercise of unlimited intelligence; but every note will reward the intensest study. In our own case, Haydn's and Mozart's major works provided staple duet-fare for an entire leisurely summer; and we worked on the nine examples of Beethoven rather continuously for two years. After wrestling ardently but painfully with the *Ninth* for weeks, and finding ourselves still just as far from *realizing* that *magnum opus* as we had been when we started (in spite of our manful singing of the arias and choruses in the last movement), we at length passed on from Ludwig to other things.

There were Händel's concertos for organ and orchestra, full of Anglo-German nobility and manliness. Even in this form they still accomplish their destined effect: more purely and powerfully than anything I know, they awaken reverberative echoes of Milton's lines "At a Solemn Musick":

And to our high-raised phantasie present
That undisturbèd Song of pure content,

Where the bright Seraphim in burning row
Their loud up-lifted Angel trumpets blow.

I don't think the famous "classical" overtures really require any boosting from me, and as my survey cannot make even a

half-pretension to completeness, I content myself by again stamping underfoot the *Poet and Peasant*, together with *Zampa* and Litolff's *Robespierre*, all of which I perhaps stupidly but none the less heartily loathe, and by merely passing on a reminder of the eternal effectiveness of Mozart's *Zauberflöte*, Beethoven's *Egmont* and *Lenore No. 3*—a reminder which may possibly bear fruit in experiments with Schumann's *Manfred*, Tschaikowsky's *Hamlet* and *Romeo and Juliet* (the best of the whole Tschaikowsky canon), with Wagner's *Faust*, with the tone-poems of Liszt, and with Brahms's *Academic Festival Overture*. I breathe a *gaudeamus* with and for this last—but now I am too swiftly outstripping the measured pace of my set schedule.

At this point, however, and before I pick up the guiding thread of my discourse, I may not irrelevantly indicate one important, if not exactly musical, by-product of the kind of activity I have been describing. Success in this field depends on the *rapproch* that can be gradually developed between the co-workers. One must soon cultivate an extremely nice apprehension of one's partner's sensibilities, or all is lost. One must realize instantly and keenly the partner's susceptibility to various contrasting passages: how he will be affected by a syrupy cantilena, how he will rise to the demands of a massy and complex development section, how he will deliver an airy pizzicato or a swift, breathless scherzo. And when two spirits thus explore the masterpieces in that art which transcends all others in purity and intensity—explore them in physical proximity and close mental union—it is inevitable that they will find, if they can persist, something of a communion of personalities: not what we glibly call "Platonic" sympathy, but what the real old uncorrupted Plato would have reveled in. Either a firm friendship is cemented by this process, or continued duet-playing becomes impossible. Before you marry, play duets with your affinity. . . . But now I am speaking out of my part. . . . Let's stick to the music.

Only fast-cemented friends, however, can hope to do anything jointly with old Johann Sebastian Bach, for the only transcriptions which do justice to his more powerful conceptions have come from the hand of Max Reger, who was (or was not) the modern Bach, and who splashed ink all over his scores with dreadful prodigality, and without any compassion for performers less able than himself. If you can play Bach-Reger, you can not only play wonderful music, wonderfully dished up; you can also assure yourself that you can henceforth play anything. Just for the fun of it, though, one ought to try the organ *Prelude and Fugue in D* and the *Passacaglia*

et Thema Fugatum in C-minor. Even a stumbling rendition of these things is stupendous in its effects. As to the *Fantasie and Fugue* in G-minor (the "great" G-minor), look at it, at least. You can't play it; nobody can; it is impossible to bring out all that is perceptible in it; I cannot believe that Bach wrote it in the first place for any man-built organ or for any human organist; even when presented in a symphony orchestra's full and augmented court-regalia, its stormily ordered voices sound too thin—as if (to lower the figure) the *Pilgrims' Chorus* were played on a penny-whistle;¹ I think it was conceived for nothing less than the massed chorus of the Olympians. Pardon this untempered outburst; I can't help letting myself go when I think of the G-minor—the most nearly divine achievement in terrestrial art so far. Duet-players ought to look at Reger's version of it—with awe—and then go about their proper business.

Which we proceed to do; we plunge on to the Romantic School. On to that renascence of emotion heralded by Beethoven's last quartets—to the region of mystery and the land of faëry, to mystical absorption in the spirit of Nature. Our gleanings here may at first seem rather meagre. Those Romantics—Schubert, Schumann, Weber, Chopin, Liszt—were such thundering good individualists, depending so largely on the lone performer's letting himself go completely, plunging on to express the outbursts of a single soul-unit, that their duet-music, good as it is, often fades into ghastly pallor if we set it beside their fiery solo-works; and these latter seem to freeze into horrid lifelessness when two performers touch them together. This is altogether true of Chopin: he adds nothing to our repertoire; his flexibility and his sweetness and power, so perilously close to banality, must be left to the mercies of our current flock of little Paderewskis. It's no food for us, to whom an adroit *tempo rubato* presents tear-compelling difficulties.

But Schubert, Weber, Schumann and Mendelssohn have left a great corpus (would anyone dare to say *cadaver*?) of original four-hand music which, whether one is entranced by it or not, is by reason of its very existence of sufficient importance to dignify and legitimize our sport. Just look at the list for Schubert: his opera Nos. 10, 27, 30, 35, 40, 51, 54, 55, 61, 63, 66, 75, 82, 84, 103, 107, 121, 138, 140, 144—all four-hand music. Obviously Schubert

¹Or, as if Händel's *Hallelujah Chorus* were played by two flutes and banjo. This act of imbecility (or genius?) has actually been done, and the lunatic "arrangement" actually exists somewhere: banjo going "plunk-a-plunk, plunk!" while flutes carry the smooth choral strain aloft. Two ocarinas and ukelele would do just as well, perhaps better. It is one of the monstrosities I *must* hear before I die.

loved the sport, or found a big demand for it. There are five sets of variations (one of the best on a theme by his friend Hérold); sixteen marches, including the notorious *Militaire*, the apotheosis of all "oompahs," a *Grande Marche Funèbre d'Alexandre I* and *Six Grandes Marches*, Op. 40, which are the best of the lot; two sonatas, both more successful than the general run of his solo-sonatas; ten polonaises; divertissements, rondos, fugues, fantasies; and finally a dashing *Allegro* (Op. 144) called *Lebensstürme*, which might serve as an interesting companion-piece for Beethoven's equally stormy *Wuth über den verlorenen Groschen*. On any page of the three generous volumes in which all this matter is usually printed, a team of players is likely to find a passage or two of characteristic Schubertian simplicity and charm; it is therefore a domain which invites the eager exploration of melodic adventure-seekers.

Weber's most popular four-hand piece will probably forever remain his own transcription of the *Aufforderung zum Tanz*; it has even more dash and verve than the solo-version. His twenty original compositions (Opp. 3, 10, 60) are *echt*-Weber: their subdued slow passages have the true romantic fervor, sometimes saturated with an agreeable *Weltschmerz*; their rapid periods are animated by all the clatter and reckless glitter of Napoleonic cavalry-charges.

As to Schumann, only a reminder is necessary: we have the *Abendlied* and *Am Springbrunnen*, familiar enough in Theodor Kirchner's arrangements for a single player. There are ten other and equally beautiful numbers in the set from which they are taken: the *Zwölf vierhändige Klavierstücke für kleine und grosse Kinder*, Op. 85. Every one of them is a delicious morsel, showing not only expert craftsmanship in miniature but also an imagination rarely alive and delicate even in the Imaginative School of composers. For perfect "characteristic pieces" see the *Bärentanz* and the *Gespenstermärchen*; for emotional expression, *Reigen* and *Trauer*. My enthusiasm for this set probably deafens me to the real merits of the *Bilder aus Osten* (6 Impromptus, Op. 66); I have never been able to feel any great magic in them. I am more easily diverted and amused by the *Ballscenen*, Op. 109, and the *Kinderball*, Op. 130, even though they demonstrate the gradual petering-out of the vein of immortal stuff in the mine that Schumann first tapped with his priceless *Kinderscenen*.

I have heard that Wagner wrote four-hand pieces in his youth, and that they are pretty bad, as might be expected. But musical archæologists will have to play duets, too, some day, in that not-

far-distant time when a Wagner-Gesellschaft will conscientiously unearth all the Wagner-apocrypha.

Mendelssohn remains. . . . It was an agreeable surprise for me to find that his *Andante and Variations*, Op. 83a, really possessed more durable qualities than the too familiar, suave Mendelssohnian prettiness, and the playing of his *Allegro Brilliant*, Op. 92, was not exactly wasted time. I may as well confess to my evident snobbishness about Felix: I simply don't like his stuff, in spite of the fact that it is now fashionable to dislike him. From this prejudice, however, I except his six fine organ sonatas. I have never seen these transcribed; they ought to be stunning.

This brings me to another by-path along our route, a neglected by-path, but full of adventuresome turnings and thrills, nervous and æsthetic. Heretofore it has been frequented only by its licensed habitués: church and concert organists—for I refer to the too seldom heard literature of the pipe-organ. Organ music, written usually for manuals and pedals, that is, with a clavier-keyboard part for the hands, and an added single line in the bass, to be played by the feet, belongs, as far as our inquiry is concerned, to the category in which we have placed the Paraphrases and Godowsky's Miniatures. For a person whose skill is but little more than nothing can sit at one's left hand and make a brave show with the pedal parts, preferably doubling them in the lower octave so as to give the sepulchral effects of the sixteen-foot pipes, the glory of the King of Instruments. Certainly even an amateur's hand should attain the dexterity of an organist's foot—here there are plenty of rests and whole notes, anyway.

Such an arrangement once effected, an inexhaustible wealth of unfamiliar music can be made to flow into one's treasures. It is music that one never hears, unless one attends organ recitals, or attends those rare churches whose organists are not addicts to the lollypop school of composition. Let me present a very incomplete annotated catalogue of the possibilities which may here be investigated by any team of duet-players:

J. S. Bach—the *Orgelbüchlein*, a set of sixty-seven preludes on Lutheran church and folk tunes, amazingly effective. All the preludes, toccatas and fugues, the *Pastorale*, the *Trio*, the six lovely sonatas, the transcriptions for organ of Vivaldi's violin concertos. Enough power here to float into glory the heaviest spirit.

Mozart—the two pretty, crinkly sonatas, written for an Eighteenth-Century clockwork organ.

Mendelssohn—the six epoch-making sonatas; also the three preludes and fugues.

Gustav Merkel and Josef Rheinberger—sonatas: grim Teutonic ponderosities, but dripping with warm and luscious gravy.

César Franck—*Trois Chorals, Prélude, Choral et Variation, Pièce Héroïque*. If enthusiasts have learned Italian merely to be able to read Dante, why may not a novice plunge into music solely to get first-hand impressions of Franck? The *Chorals*, possibly the chief inspiration for what is now known as the modern French school of composition, have actually been transcribed for piano duet.

Julius Reubke—an ill-fated genius, the Keats of music, died in 1858 at the age of twenty-four, leaving behind him one organ sonata, inspired by the Ninety-fourth Psalm: "O Lord God, to whom vengeance belongeth, show thyself!" Son of an organ-builder and disciple of Liszt, Reubke managed to pour into this opus a quantity of vigor and mysticism which even a fully matured genius would find it difficult to duplicate. If he had only lived longer!

Alexandre Guilmant and Charles-Marie Widor—sonatas and symphonies: sound, brazen stuff, the backbone of the municipal organist's bill of fare, and distinctly deserving of its place in popular honor. Worth-while, too, because it paved the way for Louis Vierne's symphonies, which are far more nervous and pungent; the third is especially admirable in its keenness and power.

Brahms—the eleven *Choralvorspiele*, his only posthumous work; handle with care, but don't miss the quivering anguish of *Herzlich tut mich verlangen*, with its melody sung in the bass under a palpitating manual-accompaniment, and the doubly-dying echoes of *O Welt, ich muss dich lassen*, the Master's death-bed farewell.

Max Reger and Sigfrid Karg-Elert—take their chorale-preludes, also Reger's Op. 59 and Elert's *Impressions*, and you have the quintessence of modern German tone-poetry, without any of the meretricious tinsel of Richard Strauss.

Take also Felix Borowski's *Suite* in E-minor and Clarence Dickinson's *Storm King* Symphony, to see what is being done by American organ composers. Most of our movie-organists have a long road to travel before they arrive at things like these; but that is no reason why duettists should not, under license of their amateur standing, exploit this rich bonanza-field for themselves.

Returning now to the main current we must follow, we extricate ourselves from the moonshiny glades, magic mazes and mossy castles of romanticism and issue into the still more trackless waste lands and heavy-fruited meadows of modernism. In passing, we glance at a few lords of the transition. Brahms we have mentioned before; but his four symphonies may well tempt those of surer technique and profounder mentality; they are eminently *klaviermässig* in their four-handed garb, at least when competent brains and muscles seize them. Grieg, too, has one more gift to bring us: his jumpy, lemon-flavored quartet, which is easy to play and delicious in its naïveté of rhythm and melody; the finale has a walloping climax in the form of a salterello, the sort of thing

that Liszt liked to call a "Swedish banko." His two *Symphonic Pieces* for two pianists are trash, lush and rank; strange and lamentable it is that these original works for our medium should prove to be such bores. The first is a blubbery, almost slobbery echo of the most sentimental Tristanesque cheapness; the second is a roaring, elephantine dance, without any delicacy; in a word, we see Grieg here trying to do the big bow-wow, with a result that we might have anticipated.

For those who still shudder and weep under the spell of the hackneyed *chefs d'œuvre* of Tschaiikowsky, there are the bombastic *Fifth Symphony* in C-minor, and the perennially lachrymose *Pathétique*, which many of us confidently imagine we have outgrown. For Franckians, we can add the *Symphony in D-minor*; for Richard Straussians, *Till Eulenspiegel*; for Korsakovians, Rimsky's *Scheherazade*. All these transcribe very well into our duet-form.

Here the transcription-hater *will* be heard; I can no longer sidestep his objections, for I have already too violently agitated the fringes of a scarred controversial battlefield, and the tortured, over-irritated, sore question of the general æsthetic legitimacy of transcribing anything cries for some sort of resolution, or at least for the application of a generous soothing-plaster. Well, not so many years ago, four-hand transcriptions, because of their possible fullness and richness, were the only convenient and cheap means of hearing and studying the orchestral literature of music. One could not hear exactly what one wanted to hear, and when one wanted to hear it, at a symphony concert. Such concerts were fewer than nowadays. Also, one hadn't a private orchestra of one's own; also, solo piano-versions were likely to be both difficult to play and meagre in their effects. The obvious solution was the duet version, with all its chromatic shortcomings. Lately the mechanical piano, still more lately the Edison type of recorder, finally the radio loud-speaker, have served to deflate this apology somewhat. But all three have their shortcomings. I for one cannot abide the pneumatic clavier. And although I realize that the newer types of victrola and similar instruments do reproduce differences in instrumental tone-color, I find them still contaminated by the deadening friction of the needle-point on the revolving gutta-percha record; I cannot disregard its scratching and hissing. The same applies to radio reproduction—even on those rare occasions when the music I want is being broadcast. On the whole, I still prefer Beethoven's *First* in duet-monochrome to any form besides its original orchestral rendition. One also might

remember that the great majority of Class A composers have countenanced transcription, even when they did not practice it: Bach practiced it freely, with his own and others' work; Franck himself threw his symphony into four-hand form. Brahms, also, rewrote his Quintet for piano and strings, Op. 34, as a Sonata for two pianos; and his Variations on a theme of Haydn, Op. 56, likewise. His Variations on a theme of Schumann in E♭, Op. 23, composed originally for four hands, are one of the most precious items in our standard repertoire.

There are to-day, at any rate, many perfectly good, sociably-inclined pianists who have never even tried this fine joyous old form of musical diversion—for reasons that have been suggested above. This was not true a couple of decades ago. It is to such persons that I am offering this apology and incitement; to them I attune my ballyhoo. Why not give the sport at least a try? Some of us have done so recently (I believe my own experiences are not altogether unique) and have found plenty of material for enthusiasm.

And suppose, for the sake of argument, that the anti-transcriptionists' position is artistically unassailable. Still there arise in a music-lover's career many situations that baffle any anti-duettist, even as they are grist to the mill of the duet-team. Here are four hypotheses to consider.

1. Suppose you want to investigate Franck's *Psyché*, his symphonic poem for orchestra and chorus. You get the composer's own household version of the score. What do you find? A *Réduction pour piano à quatre mains et chœur par l'auteur!* And the opening orchestral "dream of Psyche" is worth the trouble of setting out to find a partner.

2. You want to run over the score of Peter Cornelius's *Barber of Bagdad*. You begin with the overture: "primo" and "secondo" stare you in the face. This is Cornelius's own rewritten version; he threw away his first attempted overture, and wrote this one, at short notice, for duet, as we have it. He never lived to orchestrate it; Liszt did that job for him after his death, poor fellow.

3. You sit down to delight yourself with the available score of Sullivan's *Mikado*. Again you find the overture done as duet.

4. You take up Brahms's *Liebeslieder-waltzes*, Op. 52. He wrote them for voices and piano—four-hands!

I won't rest my case merely on curiosities, however. For it is easy to demonstrate that even if duet-playing is at this moment a nearly lost art from the performer's standpoint, it is far from being that as far as modern composition goes. Duet music of

the finest quality is being produced for us in no inconsiderable quantities—only we don't play it—and that is surely a deplorable state of affairs. By way of evidence, let me present four supreme examples by representative chiefs of various phases of present-day tonal fashions. Taken together, they surely constitute an ample justification for the continued thriving of our four-armed monstrosity—a monstrosity which is evidently not so universally despised by our front-rank composers as we may perhaps imagine. They are Claude Debussy's *Six Épigrapbes Antiques*, Maurice Ravel's *Ma Mère l'Oye*, Erik Satie's *Trois Morceaux en forme de Poire*, and Igor Stravinsky's two sets of *Pièces Faciles*. Here are four contrasted mood-cycles, delicacies for any palate: profound and serious, charming and infantine, frivolous and grotesque.

The "antique epigraphs," or ancient tomb-inscriptions, were among the last works of Debussy, and were published in the year of his death. They represent his art at its ripest and deal with a subject, for him, of uncanny suitability. In them he has at last achieved complete independence from the rococo remnant of Nineteenth-Century sentimentality or *Schwärmerei*; in them he is perfectly cool, perfectly clear-minded, perfectly detached. Yet his inimitable sentiment, straight-lined and clear-cut, succeeds in reflecting spick and sane and well-controlled emotional observations. His colors are flat, delicately composed; his harmonies are thin, his rhythms pointed and trenchant, his melodies brightly polished. In a word, his mood is the mood of the earliest Greek antiquity: an eager and ready and wide-open-eyed reveling in a balanced ecstasy of life, untroubled by heart-burnings or by insoluble puzzles in eschatology. He has discarded the mediævalism of his *Pelléas*, the decadence of his *L'Après-Midi d'un Faune*, the troubled modern hysteria of his *L'Isle Joyeuse*; he has turned for inspiration to the calm subtle beauties of the *Anthologia Lyrica* and the elegiac fragments of the Dorians and Æolians of the Sixth and Seventh Centuries B. C.; of those peculiar "modern" people who had not yet unlearned the trick of facing their world squarely and of making the very best of the sensations it offered them.

The first, *Pour invoquer Pan, dieu du vent d'été*, a calm pastoral (easy to play), is blithe, light; it tiptoes gently over warm meadows, with swallows overhead and wild roses underfoot. The second, *Pour un tombeau sans nom*, is sad with a supercivilized sadness, its sighs are unself-conscious, almost untroubled. In *Pour que la nuit soit propice* there is more animation; the night is full of erotic promise, its delights are anticipated with the eagerness of a tempered

avidity. Numbers 4 and 5, *Pour la danseuse aux crotales* and *Pour l'Égyptienne*, are more directly imaginative: here is the steely tinkle of cymbals and there a surprised chromatic orientalism, depicted with electrical energy. Finally, *Pour remercier la pluie au matin*, a toccata, vibrant, tingling, happy. Steep yourself in the remains of Alcman, Alcæus and Anacreon (or, if these are inaccessible, Catullus may be the closest possible substitute) before you try these *Épigraphes*, and you will see how priceless is their effect. If one has been poisoned by turgidity, here is an antidote to his hand; only his hand, as well as his mind, and those of his partner at the keyboard, must be feather-light and steel-sprung.

In Ravel's *Mother Goose* (5 *Pièces enfantines pour piano à 4 mains*) we find the familiar machinery and accessories of a well-conducted upper-middle-class French nursery. Again there is an absence of turgidity, whether of the saccharinity of MacDowell's *Marionettes* or of the menagerie-odors of Saint-Saëns's *Carnaval des Animaux*. It is a nursery with grey-blue painted walls, spotlessly clean, presided over by a mademoiselle who tells tea-time stories with humorous and clarified subtlety. First a *Pavane de la Belle au bois dormant*, graceful and undulating; *Petit Poucet*, the story of the birds who ate up all the crumbs by which the babes in the wood hoped to find their way back to their homely cottage: the satisfied chirps of the feathered gluttons are there, and aimlessly wandering scale-passages; then the sparkling *Laideronnette*, *Impératrice des Pagodes*, based on the Chinese five-tone scale and relating this episode from Mme. d'Aulnoy: *Elle se déshabilla et se mit dans le bain. Aussitôt pagodes et pagodines se mirent à chanter et à jouer des instruments: tels avaient des théorbes faits d'une coquille de noix; tels avaient des violes faites d'une coquille d'amande; car il fallait bien proportionner les instruments à leur taille.* Beauty and the Beast follow: Beauty is easily recognizable in a suave waltz; the sorrowful growls of the beloved Beast add piquancy to the bass, and a glissando announces his transformation into the jeweled Prince of Heart's Desire. *Le jardin féérique* closes the set: bells ring, far off and nearby, deafeningly, and the children are put to bed, drenched with bright exoticism.

Now we need something more uproarious, so we turn to the buffoonery of Satie. The three pieces in the form of a pear, *avec une manière de commencement, une prolongation du même, et un en plus, suivi d'une redite* (Septembre, 1903), are not, alas, bedecked with those grotesque stage-directions for which the irrepressible

Erik has become the idolized wag and wit of the émigrés who fill the cafés du Dôme and de la Rotonde, but all his purely musical humor is here: deliberate and mocking prettiness, shattered roughly by cacophonous punctuations; sly grins and muffled guffaws breaking in upon passages of brutal and savage seriousness. The fun is of course quadrupled by its being shared between two executants—still it manages on nearly every page to remain music of high originality and expressiveness.

Satie is, of course, the perfect preparation for Stravinsky's gayer moments as we find them in the *Trois* and *Cinq Pièces Faciles* (1917). The first group, a march, waltz and polka, is dedicated to Alfredo Casella, to Satie and to Serge Diaghileff, lord of the newer ballet; here the bass part is childishly easy, while the right-hand performer sports about with crazy agility, frequently "off-key." Of the Five Pieces (right hand easy), the flowing *Andante* and the bouncing Muscovite *Balalaïka* are the most engaging: the epitome of up-to-date nervousness and verve. Only profundity is lacking, but of that quality we have perhaps tasted too much in Debussy. For the latter, you must pull yourself together, never letting your sober alertness flag; for the Stravinsky you can let yourself go, abandoning all perspicacity; it sounds better, indeed, after the wine-bottle has circulated freely.

And now, if one or two souls have run through the gamut I have been plotting, from *Il Maestro e lo Scolare* to the *Balalaïka*—and still sigh for new notated worlds to conquer—what? Well, there is only one more thing they can do: buy a second piano, and attempt piano-forte concerto-literature, with the orchestral parts transcribed for the second instrument. Thus they can again make an adventurous journey, from Bach to Ferruccio Busoni, through Mozart, Beethoven, Schumann, Grieg, Tschaikowsky, Brahms, and Edward MacDowell! But when enthusiasts arrive at this stage, they need a celestial Beatrice and not a badly limping, sententious, pedestrian Virgil for their mentor. Accordingly, I find it politic now to make my obeisance and retire. . . . Also, my gifted brother has just arrived with a duet-version of Debussy's string quartet, and I hasten gleefully to the attack.

THE MUSIC FOR SHAKESPEARE

A SUGGESTION

By JAN NIERLING

A SENSE of music pervades Shakespeare's romantic plays just as the presence of the supernatural, of those unseen driving forces, those compelling causes and oppressive overtones which show themselves from time to time as ghosts and witches or elves, pervade so many of them. No other plays are so musical as Shakespeare's. In none others do the unheard spiritual overtones recall heard ones as in his. And in no other plays of the whole world has actual music so harmed the beauty and thwarted the creator's intention as it has in these very Shakespearean plays. Nothing on earth is so beautiful that it should be allowed to retard the lightning-swift action of Shakespeare. That is the plays' life, that swiftness. And because of that one resents the extra song or dance numbers which are by one producer or another so frequently injected into the Shakespearean score.

It is paradoxical—but no other playwright has ever lived who took such pains to include in the script itself every word and action, notwithstanding the buoyant carelessness in some other things lying just alongside of his fabulous care in this. In the "Merchant of Venice" Launcelot bids his mistress farewell with "Adieu! tears exhibit my tongue . . . these foolish drops do somewhat drown my manly spirit: adieu." Making the tears no less essential a part of the play than the words. Then in the court scene:

SHYLOCK: I cannot find it; 'tis not in the bond.

And further on, says BASSANIO to him:

Why dost thou whet thy knife so earnestly?

And GRATIANO:

Not on thy sole, but on thy soul, harsh Jew.

Whereby no actor ever plays or shall play Shylock without searching the bond and whetting his knife upon the sole of his shoe, among all the other bits of "business" made necessary by the

very mention of it. That silly little piece of business about the Nurse's fan will be a part of "Romeo and Juliet" as long as the play lasts and wherever it is played, just as every desperate Romeo will have to "take the measure of an unmade grave" in the friar's cell. In the fourth act of "Julius Cæsar" Brutus says, "Look, Lucius, here's the book I sought for so. I put it in the pocket of my gown." And he dons his dressing-gown on the stage, has his guards lie down on cushions in his tent instead of standing. No trifle is left to ingenuity or lack of it on the part of future players. And one finds his musical allusions just as significant. What songs he wished used he left to no other man—no, not even to the archæologists—to discover.

In the sonnets Shakespeare frankly admits that he is writing for posterity and naïvely confides to us that his lines shall last as long as the world itself. It is scarcely conceivable that he should not have foreseen many of the very improvements in theatrical production which have come with the changing times, and he no doubt wrote for posterity just as he wished posterity to play—and sing and dance. Especially the songs that he wished sung he himself included. The subtler music, the effects which his own sensitive ears doubtless heard, he never intended should stop the show; so he didn't include them separately. One cannot exactly say what his dreams may have been. But we supply climax-killing cadenzas in the form of inserted songs and (maybe less frequently) dances, where the great William had perhaps hoped for harmonies, for accompaniments—several shades less obvious than Wagner's, of course—no interludes at all, but everywhere instrumental snatches as casual and swift as his verbal allusions to them, strains rising spontaneously from the melody of his words and springing from their vivid fantasy;—for heard overtones swelling from the unheard, just as those vastly compelling spiritual ones take shape from their very intensity and glow before the physical eye at moments as the murdered Cæsar seems to appear, or Banquo; as Hamlet's father, who was seen by more than one, and Ariel. These are all only overtones, substantialized. So, too, should any music to the play seem.

There is a long-drawn-out song, which one of our foremost Shakespearean producers interpolates into the aforementioned tent scene of "Julius Cæsar" where Brutus asks the lad Lucius to sing to him, and which effects a very anticlimax to what follows. It is much too long, and it lulls and dulls our nerves with its lonesome sweetness. It throws the spot on the boy Lucius and, by sentimentalizing, over-endears Brutus to the

proletariat. It does indeed fix the attention for a very long while on the actor-manager playing Brutus and on his pretty young wife who plays Lucius, thereby increasing their box-office values, no doubt. But *the scene*—that nerve-stiffening scene which Shakespeare had bristling with sharp, irritating incident, the nervous doubts preceding an ill-advised battle, the quarrel with Cassius, the news of Portia's death, even the jarring mention of a mislaid book, of a broken instrument, all leading up to the unnerving presence of mighty Cæsar's ghost—that scene has become as limp as a thing deadborn. An oversentimental song is allowed to suck the very life from one of the greatest shows on earth—and we call that sort of thing perpetuating Shakespeare! Played as that scene is at present being played in the Prinzregenten-Theater in Munich there is a suggestion of song, the command is obeyed; the emotional effect is begun, achieved; but the boy falls asleep almost at once and the intensity of the scene is not let down for a moment. The play goes right on, and the perfect Roman-arch-shaped line of its action suffers neither sag nor hump to disfigure its swift curve.

Mantell used to include a woefully stiff and staid minuet in the scene where Romeo first speaks with Juliet. That correct-formal interpolated action stopped the play; the careful stiffness froze it; Cromwell's ghost had laid icy fingers on early Italian revels and thoughtless old Verona could not have recognized herself. A grim joke, that—in the name of music! Of course, Shakespeare does speak of a dance, but there is such a thing as scarcely seen dancing, half visible at most, with a not-indecent abandon at best, and passionately gay incidental music—not interludes or interpolated selections, but strings overheard, or somebody's glorified fragments, lutes perhaps, or the tuning of a harp—there is a trifle that offstage can be a heavenly trifle—or some perfect chord timed to the perfect moment. I'd like but little of your usual incidental music, which has a forward way of taking the whole stage like bold children when they see they are noticed. Not that it should be taboo for all plays. Not so. But for Shakespeare it is not the thing at all. On the other hand, this *accidental* music which must have delighted Shakespeare would have the effect of—of merely illuminating the text, let us say. With Maeterlinck it were no such difficult matter. Behind his halting sentences lies a mysterious space wanting to be filled with long stained-glass shadows and with chords rising like white jade lilies through smoke. His characters say the least when they mean the most. They are the very stuff music-drama

is made of. And Robert Browning's men and women break off speaking with a sob or a sigh when the great moment comes. For them music would express the soul where words fail. I always feel the need of music when I read or see Browning. It is a positive analysable want. But with the fluent Shakespeare it is a much more delicate matter. When, with him, can words ever be said to fail, even for the moment? They never do. In his plays music can only be as illumination to spiritual and imaginative crescendos. But which of our present Shakespearean producers is going to give us that? Who among them is artist enough?

The saddest thing about the entire Shakespearean "tradition"—our Anglo-Saxon tradition, I mean—is that the gentlemen who produce Shakespeare are so seldom artists. So rarely has any man of thrilling temperament and exquisite taste laid his quivering fingers on Shakespeare. British reserve and self-consciousness have distorted, have nearly frozen the plays of ancient and Italian life, those vibrating and passionate tragedies; while a more brittle cockney sort of humor has been substituted for the intense, fluent Latin gayety. And manner of interpretation alters any creation. It is nothing but a worn fallacy that Shakespearean humor was, is, and must always be of an English brew. Why invariably drag in merrie England when the playwright himself wrote so often and so well in a stranger key? It is as ridiculous as that other notion that Shakespeare should always be adorned with British music of his own day. To suppose that, is deliberately to ignore the poet's own musical understanding; for that man of a multi-racial understanding and of such an infinitely superior taste—despite the Gallic cry of "Barbarian!"—were he Shakespeare, Bacon, or the Man in the Moon, knew what he knew and did what he did better than his most scholarly admirers have ever realized.

It is proper to continue in the use of Elizabethan tunes to the popular songs of the day wherever their words are found in the plays. They do indeed form an integral part of the text, such songs as "O Willow, Willow" and those in "King Lear." Shakespeare seems to have appreciated instinctively the music of his own time. I feel that he intentionally implied the use of certain well-known melodies by the inclusion of their words when he himself could so easily have written other words, as in other cases he so often did. In the same way that he demanded definite action and certain stage business, not by stage directions but through the text, he implied the necessary use of fitting tunes by borrowing the well-known words that went with them. So in cases where popular songs, having established tunes, are included in the

play, the use of these tunes is the only thing possible. Nor shall that imply that it is not a good thing. It is—the best thing possible!

It is, however, only for certain moods that Shakespeare employs the tunes of his time at all: before Desdemona's death; after Ophelia's grief has left her mind vacant and weary; in those desperately pathetic scenes of "Lear." There are other places, too, but these are typical. In such cases he uses these certain songs of the time with their wailing progressions and desponding cadences. But exactly there does one come upon the broad way of Shakespeare's musical feeling and of his own discrimination. By the suggestion of traditional words he suggested use of the traditional tune; which is not saying that similar traditional tunes were not used for all other songs as well as for the certain few. One must use what there is to use! Nor is there any weighty reason for believing that Shakespeare himself may not have been delighted with them all. (I am not here to erect an idol to a new manifestation of the god as all-round prophet and far-seer.) It does seem, though, that original songs fitting other moods were not to be forever bound to "tradition" and local, sometimes primitive, music if his own neglect to associate them with familiar tunes could keep them free. If producers would only discriminate between what Shakespeare himself implied should be done and what simply "was done" in his own day, done to him, owing to the fact that other arts than his own were as yet either less splendidly developed in England or far too local in color to accompany his unique fantasy on its trip through the universe—if they would only recognize this, what an awkward bundle of antiquated chaff might be dropped by the way!

Allowing for a famous ballad or two, it is only the dance-music of Elizabeth's time that modern producers seem willing to utilize in Shakespearean production. That has always the charm of quaintness for modern ears, but, played as it is nowadays played, it lacks both the proverbial freedom of the age it belongs to and the elasticity of style and manner that distinguishes Shakespeare. Modern interpreters allow it merely the charm of a beautiful marionette. Moreover, it is not dance-music that is wanting in Shakespeare, even at his gayest, for the tighter and more regular the rhythm the more it appears like a cramp to hinder his swift, free stride.

Besides, literature develops faster than music; it becomes finished earlier; in most parts of the world it has attained maturity before the music of the land: it is the nature of literature

to ripen sooner. Less universal in appeal, it still reaches the stage of *apparent* universality and *obvious proportions* earlier than the subtler and less aggressive art. Bach could express all that Molière could say, for modern music with him already had come into its own. But Shakespeare's art seems to tower above the music of his age like the Campanile of Pisa which is set in a meadow of daisies. I think Shakespeare himself must have been conscious of the fact, judging from his own subtle discrimination in including, in certain places and usually for a few certain moods, songs whose words called for the certain appropriate melodies which went with them. It is interesting to note that in most instances he left his song tune-free—which may be significant of nothing more than the famous negligence, but the longer I study Shakespeare the more aware I am of a positively fabulous care in all details bearing on theatrical effect.

English music has never equalled English literature, has never reached Shakespearean heights. Still, now is the proper time, in this, the very age of impressionism; for Shakespeare was a magnificent impressionist. Why doesn't Percy Grainger turn his apt gayety to the comedies, only the English comedies, or to those and those others which without straining seem more English than anything else—parts of "Twelfth Night" for example, "The Merry Wives of Windsor" for a certainty? I'll venture that he could arrange that entire fifth act with its dancing, touching everything from "Sweet Ann Page in green" to Slender in a manner to have delighted Shakespeare. There is an act which can stand a touch of genius in production, anyway. I have seen it topple for the want of it. Why doesn't Mr. Grainger do it—for our generation, at least?

Only the shell-pinks and ethereal blue shadows, those orchid-cloud harmonies which started with Debussy, could match the strange, delicate beauty of "The Tempest." Debussy and his kind had and still have a knack of weaving dreams and arabesques in harmony and in moonlight. With all its seeming vagueness it actually resembles the strong lovely lace of Shakespeare's own plot-weaving and his subtle repetition. Such music might follow such a play as "The Tempest" like a reflection in the water. There might be a suggestion—merely a suggestion—of motif. Shakespeare, despite the cumbersome manner of its production outside of Germany and Russia, is neither slow-moving nor obvious, as a "Miracle" or Wagnerian drama might properly be; and the "grand flourish" does not belong to Shakespeare. In his art he is the soul of agility. Nor do I wish to be misunderstood

(having mentioned Wagner and stressing always the desirability of accompaniment instead of interpolated music) or have it suspected that I fancy anything like a Wagnerian music-drama-effect would do for even a moment. Never that. Wagner is German; Shakespeare is Shakespeare; and his plays all move with the speed of eels rushing to the sea. Because the treatment in both cases is suggestive and picturesque does not imply that the manner or mood or method be similar at all. And for Shakespeare I would do away with not only the customary overture and entr'actes but with all manner of prelude as well. There would be but precious little music, therefore precious. I would have the play go swiftly through to its finish with but one brief intermission, as is done in Germany. Nothing in the name of music should hinder.

"The Merchant of Venice" might have music scattered all through it, but not sentimental inserted serenades where reckless romantic action is the thing, nor little tunes standing out like cheap little jewels on a chaste gold ring. The last act should be pervaded with music and quivering as with the moonlight—but poignantly and thrillingly, not cautiously dotted with the neat English tunes one usually hears in that so perfectly Italian scene.

The "Midsummer Night's Dream" could be illuminated with tone as the old manuscripts were, Shakespeare's own motifs merely harmonized—but with such a sensitive attention to changes of key, to modulation of mood and rhythm and tempo, as Shakespeare himself so delicately wrought. The arabesque of its design should be outlined with the sensitive sureness of Chinese brushwork, the interlacing themes emphasized by vivid characteristic color. Brilliantly, though, all but nervously, like those butterflies' wings that come from India! To suppose that Mendelssohn, whose music has a way of getting itself used on ceremonial occasions, was brilliant enough to add luster to such a fugue of fantasy as the "Midsummer Night's Dream," a thing so exquisitely cut, so delightfully juggled, is but a notion to be tied in the packet with other notions and nose-gays and valentines, sweet souvenirs of the nineteenth century.

In the "Macbeth" recently produced in the Prinzregenten-Theater in Munich one overhears the bagpipes (with the "all's well" melodiousness that only bagpipes do have) playing festive tunes for the entertainment of Duncan, the King, as Macbeth and his wife hurriedly plan Duncan's murder on the chilly stair of the outer court. It is vastly effective, ghastly gay.

I'd let "Love's Labour Lost" and "As You Like It" remain French for once, at least paint them always with an accent, colouring them from M. Tiersot's vast collection-palette. The Italian plays I'd never touch with other than a Latin hand. By music I'd translate them all back to the moods they were written in, before the first ambitious producer made free to alter whatever he touched. It is only when one leaves the plays as he finds them, producing them for what they show themselves to be, realizing without altering them to comply with traditional error, that one sees—and how clearly—that Shakespeare himself actually valued atmosphere and understood its working qualities more perfectly than we in all these three hundred years have ever cared or tried to believe. In schoolroom analysis we have always pigeonholed the great characters of the plays. We have pinned them to historical time and place like the helpless insects of another collection. But where it really matters, in theatrical production, we have whitewashed everything possible with the *feeling* of jolly old England; and in the little music used we can almost be said to have offended most, for of all things music has the greatest "carrying" quality, the greatest power of positively suggesting something or something else. Where music does not strengthen an illusion it proves its very unmaking.

Through the "Winter's Tale" runs the tragi-melancholy of Sicilian folk-song. Surely no man ever tempered his characters and their action more closely to local colour and atmosphere than Shakespeare did. The melody of "Amuri, Amuri," of the "Canzuna di li Carriteri" or of the "Canto del Carcerato" ("Song of the Prisoner"), might have inspired the "Winter's Tale." The same deep sigh goes through both play and songs. In the appreciation of the universality of Shakespeare's genius appreciation of the modal peculiarities of the individual plays has suffered much. If each play were first tuned to the mood of the folk-song of the place or places where its scenes are laid, never again would the thirty-seven plays impress one as they sometimes must, as of so many mantles dipped in the dye-pot together.

If it actually seems better to do entirely without music in Shakespeare it is because Shakespearean production still remains in the hands of those who approach it as literary men, declaimers with a mania for the historically "correct" instead of sensitive artists concerned with the artistically beautiful. These gentlemen have a knack of including music only where it hinders. They have inserted stiff tunes of the times where subtly accompanying undertones and overtones or claps of theatrical genius alone

could have added anything to the effect. They have used massive and "ambitious" compositions as overtures and have hurt the plays' unity by lengthy entr'actes, by music whose one bond of union was often no spiritual tie, but lay in the fact that it bore the play's name as its name. While all round about, the great music literature lay like a garden from which shreds and strains—not additional, extra-incidental, parasitical, but accompanying snatches, *accidentally* audible phrases and chords could be gathered, stolen in great multicolored bouquets to heighten the effect of the inaudible music of Shakespeare. (Music more than anything else resembles perfumes in the passionate subtlety and appeal of its reach.) In Shakespeare it must exist, not separately, but like those fatal and mostly unheard dominants and tonics, the ghosts, the weird sisters, the dreams, existing alongside of visible and heard things. It must break upon the consciousness as they do, vaguely or poignantly, to intensify a lightning-like effect or to deepen the dream. So might music infinitely sharpen the peculiar impressions of the various plays. And only so can even music add a jot to the peculiar beauty of Shakespeare.

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IMPRESSIONS AND REMINISCENCES

By BENNETT CHALLIS

IT takes two, a stage and a public, to bring about a theatrical performance of any kind, yet so accustomed are we to accepting this very obvious fact without further thought, that we seldom realize how very essential the public's part in this arrangement is. If we may be permitted to resort to a simile of organic life, the two may be said to approach each other as prospective, or at least potential lovers, the stage undoubtedly the man of this situation, gallant and eager even to the point of boldness in his wooing, the public a proud, true woman, conscious of her own worth and dignity, yet by nature receptive and full of secret longing to be won. Is the wooing to her liking, she will glory and revel in being carried away even to the point of delirious abandon; in the contrary event her rejection is capable of infinite grades of intensity, from a polite and not unfriendly "no," to frigid hostility, and on up the scale to the point of vehemence and insults. The fact dare not be overlooked however, that, although we have agreed upon a public essentially feminine in its passive receptivity, and a stage active and masculine to the point of aggressiveness, here also, as in real life, the sexes interlap: there is no man, however strong, without some of the receptive sensitiveness of the woman, no woman, however shy and tender, without some traces of masculine initiative and force. Even so in the theater: our stage is often receptive and responsive in true feminine fashion—must be;—and our Lady Public is not always confined to getting responsively excited, but is capable, under certain circumstances, of masculine aggressiveness to spare. Nor is this aggressiveness necessarily confined to the reaction and upheaval attendant on a temperamental fiasco: it may take the form of very cold-blooded self-assertiveness, entirely independent of the stage and its goings-on. There are even isolated cases, generally of a humorous nature, where the normal situation is inverted and the rôles exchanged, i.e., where the public (or a portion of it) has become the amusement-maker, the "stage," and the stage proper is compelled to interrupt its own accustomed activities, and merely join in the laugh and enjoy itself as "public."

Before leaving this simile of the sex-relations, it may not be out of place to try to pacify the objections of certain enthusiastic young stage-folk who have heard a lot about how one should never "play to the gallery," should "forget that the public exists," etc., all most excellent, sound and wholesome advice for individual players, yet even as such only relative, to be taken *cum grano salis*. The present argument, moreover, has not to do with individual human beings as such, but merely with two abstractions: "stage" and "publics," i.e., with two realities and two collective units which are nevertheless neither real nor units (are in fact nothing at all) until sovereign thought has created them as such. Once created, however, they exist, and in a definite relation to one another. The above figure of speech is only an attempt, but a sincere attempt, to illustrate this relation. Let the thoughtful reader but recall vividly a single case of such a "happy union" between stage and public as here referred to, and it is safe to say that he or she will recognize the old familiar words: "two minds with but a single thought, two hearts that beat as one," as thoroughly applicable.

With these facts and possibilities in mind, as bases of comparison, let us now turn to our subject proper, and endeavour to look into the leading characteristics of the opera publics of Europe which the author happens to know, choosing to concentrate on opera publics, because he knows those best.

Southern peoples in general, especially of the Latin races, are fond of thinking, and of telling you about it, too, at all possible opportunities, that they possess much more "temperament" than their northern neighbors. If they mean by temperament the capacity for emotion in general, it would be easy to prove their boast unwarranted, for as a matter of fact intensity of inner feeling seems to increase, in inverse ratio to the outward display of the same, from South to North rather than vice versa, and it is said that Scandinavian girls have been known to die suddenly, as if struck by lightning, from the stress of over-pent-up emotion, with almost no outward display. If our southern friends mean demonstrativeness, however, when they say temperament, I frankly and decidedly agree with them. Not only are they more demonstrative but more naïve and spontaneous than Northerners; the Italians especially are often delightfully ingenuous.

How much climate may have to do with the matter in either case, and how much race and language (the latter two at all events inseparable), is a subject for the scientists, not for our present observations. We are interested, I take it, only in the facts as

we find them, and these facts, as above hinted at along general lines, are nowhere more visible and evident than at a performance of opera before an assembly of any one of the peoples in question.

The surface of the matter has long since been generally known and recognized: no opera singer would expect, other conditions being equal, the same warmth and generosity of applause from a Teutonic as from a Latin audience. Even this general rule, however, is not invariable, does not always hold good, and the real truth lies much deeper, and is much too varied and subtle to be expressed easily and surely in generalities of any kind. As said above, all publics are essentially feminine in their attitude, i.e., passively receptive at the outset and responsive to wooing and caresses. Just as no two women, however, will react in precisely the same manner to "little things" that please them, and more especially to things that hurt them, either physically or morally, in exactly the same way it will be hard to find any two publics, even of the same race and region, which will always react in the same fashion to given stimuli.

Especially interesting is each individual public's reaction to the details of a performance which displease or actually hurt it (singing off key, for example). Here the Latins prove particularly true to their natures and to their reputations and "speak right out in meeting" when their ears are offended (in some towns much more than in others, to be sure), with a spontaneity, a suddenness and a cruel frankness all their own, which must indeed be appalling to the inexperienced and unsuspecting culprit at his first offence. Nothing of the kind is known in lands Teutonic, hence we are safe in saying that this habit and tradition of most Latin publics, of punishing artistic misdemeanours on the spot, is the essential feature which distinguishes them from all other opera publics known.

This is also undoubtedly what makes southern publics on the whole more interesting and picturesque, and an almost inexhaustible source of humorous anecdotes. I spoke in the introduction of the inevitable admixture of certain masculine elements in all women, and carried this over into the simile of publics as essentially feminine. Here, with a typical Latin public sitting in summary judgment on some luckless singer culprit, one can best see these masculine elements at work: the Lady Public may, with sufficient provocation, become as bitterly aggressive as an enraged mob of would-be lynchers. There is a little town called Jesi, for example, perched up in the hills near the Adriatic, somewhere east of Rome, incidentally the birthplace of the composer Pergolesi,

where patriotic natives still proudly relate of the tenor who once years ago had to be taken out of the theater through a hole in the roof, then let down a ladder in a back alley and smuggled in a closed carriage to the station, in order to rescue him from the mob which was guarding all the exits of the theater, determined, at his appearance, to "beat him up." The author was, to be sure, not personally present at this little incident, but he got the story at headquarters, nevertheless, having sung some years later at Jesi, in celebration of Pergolesi's two-hundredth birthday.

It is probable in the case at hand that some personal offense had been added to the unfortunate tenor's artistic shortcomings, although, to be exact, no such explanation was offered by Jesi's informative citizens. It is well-nigh unbelievable, however, that even in the "wild and woolly East" of Italy a singer, however bad, should ever suffer or be threatened with actual physical violence because of his bad performance alone. The public may indeed become enraged at him for a flat or cracked high note, but that rage and the ominous storm of whistles which give it expression are reflex action, pure and simple, absolutely ungovernable and immediate. A certain store of extra energy has been accumulating in the optimistic soul of the public, in joyful anticipation of a particularly beautiful phrase with a culminating high note which it knows and loves: is the note delivered satisfactorily, that pent-up energy will burst automatically into a storm of frantic applause; is the note sung flat or does it break, the disappointment is proportionate to the anticipated enjoyment, and that same surplus energy finds its outlet just as automatically in violent expression of exactly the reverse character. Five minutes later the whole incident is forgotten. Other singers have come on—an impresario, however poverty-stricken, seldom succeeds in engaging all bad ones—other moments of enjoyment have been offered to compensate for the previous disappointment; unless the same singer offends so repeatedly and insistently as to rack the nerves of even the most good-natured and long-suffering, there is no personal resentment felt whatever; on the contrary, at the close of the performance one is apt to overhear many a compassionate "Poveretto!" and other remarks indicative of a disposition to excuse rather than to condemn. In the case of exceptionally nervous, sensitive publics, such as those notoriously severe ones of the province of Emilia—it is frequently told of Parma, for example—it is even nothing unusual for the whistled artist to redeem himself during the course of the same performance, for him to be whistled and cat-called in the first act and be made the object of a perfect

ovation in the third. If the conditions are reversed, however, if the artist in question does his good singing in the first act and his bad in the third or fourth, his triumph at the beginning of the performance will not sufficiently prejudice the public in his favor to shield him from the punishment of his transgressions when the time comes. In fact, at the moment of his transgression everything else is forgotten, nothing else exists. The eternal present reigns supreme.

Premeditated whistling at any rate is rare, and invariably indicative of a strained and abnormal situation, brought about by some personal conflict between performer and public; indeed, in almost all instances, by the open rebellion of the former and his refusal humbly to accept the verdict of the sovereign tribunal. If this refusal be openly expressed in words or gestures, then war is on: the whole public is insulted, very much insulted, and under such circumstances its vindictiveness knows almost no limit. It is safe to say, therefore, that the Jesi culprit above referred to must have told the public when they whistled him, that they were a "razza d'ignoranti" anyway, that he had sung with success in theaters compared with which the opera house of Jesi resembled a dog-kennel (as a matter of fact they have a very large and beautiful old opera house in Jesi), or made other little amiable remarks from the stage, of a similar nature, in which case the police was most certainly justified in hustling him out of town as quickly and quietly as possible.

The author was once eye-witness to the deliberate punishment of another celebrated tenor, simply for having resented the lack of applause: there had been no positive expression of disapproval whatsoever. The scene was Alexandria, Egypt. The dramatic tenor of the company had quarreled with the management and skipped out, and Signor B. had come to replace him, called by telegraph. B. was still remembered as a one-time celebrity, and known to have money. People couldn't understand therefore why he had accepted the position in Alexandria, which he did not need, for a relatively meagre monthly salary, and this very question, about town, was no good advertisement for Signor B. His debut, in *Aida*, took place before a sceptical public, and though he acquitted himself relatively well as "Radames," he did not succeed in breaking through the wall of diffidence which kept him from "reaching" his public. Exactly what he did at the end of the third act, when the public did not demand the customary repetition of his final phrase "Sacerdote, io resto a te!" and only very lukewarm applause greeted him from a portion of the house, no

one seemed to know, but it was known and immediately whispered about that the public of the gallery ("tutti Siciliani," one was told) was offended because Signor B. had defied them, with word or gesture, or with both, at the end of the third act. His second performance, this time as Faust, gave the sequel. His vindictive Sicilian friends of the gallery came armed, but left him unmolested until he began his aria, "Salve dimora," in the third act. This was the signal. "Salve dimora casta e pura": a bunch of radishes fell at Signor B's feet. The same phrase repeated: B. dodged a well-aimed tomato. "Che mi rivela la fanciulla": a head of lettuce was the offering. "Che al guardo mio," etc.: a couple of potatoes, and so on to the close of the aria, at the end of every phrase a new "bouquet," until about all the varieties of vegetables known to Egypt's soil had been exhausted. Fortunately Signor B. bore the test like a hero: it seemed to steel his nerves rather than shatter them, and people who had known him well for years declared that he had never sung that aria better in his best days.

There are other motives, however, beside violently expressed disapproval of performance, which may under certain circumstances bring about an equally bitter conflict between artist and public. The great Tamagno, for example, was once giving guest performances of *Otello* at the Teatro Massimo di Palermo. *Otello* was his greatest rôle, written expressly for him by Verdi and Boito, and he was receiving seven thousand lire a performance for his services, perhaps the highest salary ever paid to any artist in Palermo. In addition to this salary his contract guaranteed him a benefit performance, at raised prices, with a large percentage of the net receipts as his share. The high prices proved an obstacle to many members of even his doting public, and when the evening came the theater was by no means full. The great tenor, who had evidently counted on a "teatro esaurito," with so and so many additional thousands in his pocketbook, was extremely disappointed and angry. Instead of concealing his irritation to the best of his ability, he deliberately chose the moment in the second act when, at a culminating point of Iago's insinuations, *Otello* bursts forth on a high note with the famous phrase: "Miseria mia!" ("My misery!") to give public vent to all of his indignation. Instead of "Miseria mia" he sang with a distinctness of pronunciation all his own: "Miseria vostra" meaning in this case: "your poverty!" with a certain admixture of "your stinginess!" and "your insignificance!" I sincerely believe that in any German or Anglo-Saxon opera house, however severely individual comment might later have censured this very appalling piece of tactlessness,

the first and immediate effect would have been a general and tremendous laugh. Not so in Palermo. The perfect pandemonium which ensued bore none of the earmarks of hilarity, and had any of the enraged members even of Palermo's "better" public been able to lay hands on him at that moment, poor Tamagno would certainly have received serious bodily injuries, and plenty of them! As it was, the police had a time of it guarding the various entrances to the stage, until they could persuade Tamagno to go before the curtain and apologize—which he finally did!—otherwise they, the police, refused to assume any further responsibility for his safety.

This reminds me of another Palermo incident which will illustrate the character of this highstrung and sensitive public from an entirely different side. A certain baritone received one of the greatest if not the greatest ovation of a long, successful career, for a declamatory scene which he was compelled to carry with nothing but dramatic intensity and whispered words, inasmuch as he had absolutely no voice left, either to sing or speak with. Such an exception to all the rules was naturally only possible under very peculiar circumstances. This baritone had been unusually successful in Palermo, a couple of months before, in six or seven guest performances of *Mephistofele* in Berlioz's "Damnation of Faust." Then he had returned to La Scala in Milan, where he was engaged for the season. Meanwhile Massenet's *Thaïs* had been given in Palermo with a French baritone of repute, who was nevertheless roundly whistled and sent home after a single performance. The powers that were in Palermo decided that none but "Mephistofele" could save the day, but this luckless individual was on his back in Milan with double pneumonia, with the odds heavy for non-recovery. His physicians answered the first telegrams to the effect that all singing would be out of the question for weeks, perhaps for months. The Palermitani replied that they would wait, and they did wait. Four weeks later the baritone, a shadow of his former self, left Milan against his doctors' orders, for Palermo. One or two rehearsals only, a further week of absolute rest in Sicilian sea-air, at Florio's generous insistence—Ignazio Florio, that paragon of the gentleman impresario—and then the "day of reckoning." A brilliant first act, with the public wildly enthusiastic and friends on the stage madly congratulatory, set a pace which the baritone already feared he'd not be able to maintain. The vocal cords indeed—after their long rest—were in the pink of condition, but the old sustaining lung-power was still missing. In the second act he

grew hoarse and hoarser, by the beginning of the third his voice was entirely gone. It was the parting scene of "Thaïs" and "Atanæle." The latter stands very woe-begone in the midst of the desert, and watches his beloved being led away by the prioress across the sands to the distant convent. This situation—the more so because all of his own creating—does not appeal to him in the rosy light he had anticipated. On the contrary he does—in recitative form—some very bitter complaining, and soliloquizes on the hardness of his personal fate and the general uselessness of almost everything, while the first violinist of the orchestra sobs out his famous solo, one of Massenet's most touching melodies. Here it was that the unexpected, the unheard-of happened. The prima donna was so convinced that as a result of the baritone's voicelessness there was going to be a scandal, that she had locked herself in her dressing-room in order not to hear the whistles. The baritone could do nothing but stand there and look very unhappy (he was!) and tremble visibly, and work the technique of the stage-whisper overtime. They applauded him, against all reason, as never before, as never again, standing and clapping like mad, and calling out from all parts of the house: "Ti conosciamo!" "Non fa niente!" "Ti vogliamo bene lo stesso!" etc., etc., until the poor chap, standing there and bowing for about five consecutive minutes, finally shed actual tears, of nervousness perhaps, but also certainly of sincere gratitude. Nor did the matter end here. Two days later there was the second performance, and in the course of a month the sick man had sung "Atanæle" seven and "Mephistofele" four more times, to constantly packed and enthusiastic houses, and had practically regained his health in so doing.

I have dwelt a bit on this story perhaps, in order to prove that Sicilians, however highstrung and impulsive, can under the proper circumstances be as fair and just and loyal as Norwegians—that, in fact, when one gets down to first principles, loyalty and the sense of justice are universal human traits. Let no one jump to the conclusion however, after reading the above, that generally speaking a doctor's certificate is a good short cut to favor with an Italian public. Exactly the opposite is true, and especially in the province of Emilia, in that group of much dreaded theaters, Piacenza, Modena, Reggio Emilia and Parma, which mark the chief stops on the main line from Milan to Bologna, any attempt to excuse bad performance on the ground of illness is almost invariably met with feelingless outcries from all over the house: "Se è ammalato, vada all'ospedale!" ("If he's sick, let him go to the hospital!")

The naïvete of certain Italian publics, referred to above, can be best illustrated by mention of a typical personal experience repeated in a number of provincial towns. Anyone who has occasion—as has repeatedly been the author's lot—to be the first interpreter of the part of "Scarpia" in *Tosca*, for example, or of any other equally detestable villain, in some relatively small Italian town, can count upon being insulted vehemently at the culminating points of the drama with such venomous epithets from the gallery as: Assassin! Dog! Scoundrel! Murderer! etc., always provided, of course, that his histrionic performance be convincing. In fact, such direct insults, administered during an act, are the best possible measure of an actor's success, and the applause at the end of the act will invariably be proportionate to the number and vehemence of such insults, once the childlike spectators have had time to "cool down" and realize the fiction of it all.

It is highly improbable that a like phenomenon is to be found anywhere outside of Italy. Other countries all have their ignoramuses and "farmer" spectators, to be sure, who often, at their first visit to a theater, make ingenuous and sometimes laughable remarks, but as in the case of the German peasant-woman who, on hearing *Lohengrin* for the first time, asked her husband: "Was will der Leutnant mit der Gans?" (What is the lieutenant up to with that goose?) one can never be quite sure whether such is the spontaneous expression of pure ignorance, or not rather just a piece of "Bauernschlauheit" trying to be facetious. Not only are such doubts quite out of the question in the case of the Italian "ingenui," but the expressions of the latter are in no sense indicative of low intelligence or even necessarily of illiteracy. It is entirely a question of temperament, of racial psychology, a question of the "immediateness" of things down there, the unconscious philosophy of the unique and intense reality of the present moment.

Italian publics were formerly very jealous of their time-honored right to demand the "bis" (encore) of anything in the opera which they cared to hear a second time, even if it happened to be a particularly beautiful death scene, and the singer in question had first to be "resurrected" in order to "die again" for the edification of his listeners. A group of pioneer conductors finally made bold to declare war on this abuse; the great Toscanini took the lead. The fiercest pitched battle recorded in the annals of this "war" was the one fought to a finish by Toscanini with the public of La Scala, during a performance of *Un Ballo in Maschera*, in one of the early years of this century. Zenatello was singing. The

public demanded the "bis" of his song in the second act: "È scherzo od è follia." Toscanini refused. The public insisted, became obstinate—Toscanini held his ground. His opponents grew violent, abusive; in the midst of the infernal racket a continuation of the music was impossible. The maestro stood it without moving a muscle as long as he could (the exact number of long, long minutes is not recorded), then quietly laid down his baton and left his chair and the theater. It is further related, that when the directors of La Scala sought him the next morning, he was no longer in Milan, and that he sailed with the next boat for South America. For the truth of these latter statements I cannot vouch, but the important fact in the case is history, viz., that many years passed before Toscanini was again seen in La Scala, and that when he did return, it was to command the respect of his audience in this and every other regard. The "bis" in La Scala had been forbidden by law, moreover, a few days after the above historical event, and none such have been granted, in La Scala, from that day to this.

Speaking of the "bis" habit I am tempted to take a little pleasure trip into Spain. What I have said about the tastes and customs of Latin publics in general, applies to the Spaniards as well as to the Italians, but my allotted space will not permit of going very deeply into local peculiarities in either country. What now occurs to me has to do with the tenor Francisco Viñas (or Vignas as the Italians write it, to preserve the pronunciation), one of Spain's most celebrated and most beloved sons, and one of the most sterling artists the world has ever known. This man made his début at the Teatro Liceo of Barcelona as Lohengrin, sang Lohengrin over *seven hundred times* all over the Latin world, and expected, as he told me a few months prior to the event, to close his career on the twenty-fifth anniversary of his début, in the Teatro Liceo of Barcelona (he was born and lived not far from there), with a performance of *Lohengrin*. Now it was a time-honored tradition that Viñas, when singing in Spain, should always repeat the "Story of the Grail" of the fourth act in the language (or dialect) of the town in which he happened to be singing; if in Madrid, in Castellano, if in Barcelona, in Catalan, etc. The author happened to have the good fortune to sing Telramund to Viñas' *Lohengrin* in Madrid, in some thirty performances. Twenty-nine times he heard the "Story of the Grail" first sung in Italian and then repeated in Castellano, but on the thirtieth evening something unheard-of happened: the public had incurred the displeasure of the old veteran in some way or another, and was

promptly "punished" by having to listen to the "bis" not in its own beloved Castellano, but in Italian. Nor did they fail to understand! They loved Viñas far too dearly to whistle him (he was one exception), but the audible murmurings of that ominous gallery (where a thousand musicians and art students pass final judgment on Madrid's opera performances) proved that they got the point, and resented it.

One thing happened in Madrid in those years, which as far as I know has never been equalled in any other theater. For five consecutive special performances of *Carmen*, three recognized celebrities, mezzo-soprano, tenor and baritone, were roundly whistled and otherwise ridiculed every night, but for each of the five performances the house was nevertheless entirely sold out. The artists in question were all good ones, but Madrid is for national reasons crankier about *Carmen* than about any other opera, and these three interpretations of Spanish character were weighed in the balance and found wanting. The startling thing about it all was that no one was particularly unhappy. The impresario first of all beamed with contentment, for he was making money. Even the three "victims" were being paid promptly and very handsomely to let themselves be whistled, so that they could afford to smile a little too. As for the "paraíso," as the famous gallery is called, it had the "time of its life" in the opportunity to be just as obstreperous and ill-mannered as it pleased.

As hinted at above, northern publics are so well-behaved as compared to their southern neighbors as to be almost uninteresting. Immediate and direct public criticism of the artist is a negligible quantity. In general the only thing the poor devil who happens to be singing badly can notice, is a gradually increasing frigidity of the atmosphere, which may, nevertheless, if he is a good reader of signs, cause him more secret misery than the stormy protests of the Latins. He will not really know what people thought of him, however, until he reads his newspaper the next morning: the unrestricted, cruelly frank censorship of the "loggione" in Bologna or in Naples and of the "paraíso" in Madrid, is assumed in Germanic countries by the newspaper critic. This gentleman exists of course in the South also, but after our singer culprit has had a thorough beating at first hand during the performance, why "rub it in" the next morning? Hence, most criticisms in Latin countries give but faint reflections of what took place the night before, and personal censure is almost invariably veiled in polite phraseology. Not so in northern lands, particularly in Germany; there our

critic has a disconcerting way of striking straight from the shoulder, doubtless to make up for the polite reticence of the public. In saying that northern publics almost never openly express their disapproval of a bad performance I must make one exception, though it hits the artist but indirectly: the hissing down of undeserved applause is, as far as my experience goes, universal in all countries.

No comparative study of Latin and Teutonic publics can ever be fair or adequate without consideration of the relative social and economic conditions of the artists in the respective countries. For the sake of direct and graphic illustration let us confine our attentions for the moment to Germany and Italy: The German opera is organized, from top to bottom, and practically all subsidized and controlled by government, either general or municipal. Perhaps 95 per cent. of all the artists are under contracts which bind each of them to some one theater, for periods generally of from three to five years, and are on duty the year round, barring a summer vacation of from six to ten weeks. In some theaters their position is clearly specified as that of "Beamten," and is subject to the same laws regulating economic conditions—the limitation, gradation and increase of salaries, etc.—as that of other government officials. Practically all German opera singers therefore have their homes and families in the town where they are engaged, and a relatively small but sure monthly salary represents more to them than it possibly could to their Italian colleagues, working under infinitely less stable conditions.

In Italy almost all theaters are still conducted on the basis of private speculation, even if certain municipalities do offer the impresario inducements, in the way of free light and heat or even a small "dote" or subsidy. The "stagioni" or opera seasons are, with few exceptions, of from one to three months' duration only, and no contracts are made for the duration of more than one such "stagione." This keeps the artists continually on the road, spending the half of their salaries in hotel-bills and railroad-fare, and constantly gravitating back to Milan at the close of each season in search of a new engagement. The "Galleria Vittorio Emanuele," Milan's theatrical board of trade, and itself one of the most picturesque phenomena of the whole theatrical world, is a natural outgrowth of this system. There are without doubt more opera-singers, good, bad and indifferent, to the square inch, to be counted any day in the year, on the pavement of that four-winged, covered arcade with central octagon, than any place else on earth.

Let us look now at the influence of these conditions on the attitude of the respective publics. German artists grow to be looked upon as fixtures, as town-property, so to speak, and in proportion as they are successful, they stimulate the personal pride of the citizens, who love to brag of *their* lyric tenor, or of *their* dramatic soprano, as superior to the corresponding artists of a neighboring town. Their favorite artists are then honored, personally, as respectable citizens, form friendships, are "invited out" by the best families, and in the theater are often made the objects of personal ovations, warmer and more prolonged than any corresponding manifestations in Italy. It is nothing unusual, moreover, for these ovations to be continued on the street after the performance. In Hamburg, for instance, after particularly successful performances, the street on the side of the stage-exit would be jammed full of people for half an hour after the performance, or until each of their favorites had appeared to take his or her good-night cheering.

Escorts to the artist's hotel or residence were rare at night, but the more frequent in the daytime, after rehearsals, for the simple reason that they were made up principally of "Backfische" (high-school girls) whose natural supply of courage is after all considerably augmented by the sun's rays. And yet there are exceptions even here. One fine spring night in Dresden, after one of Siegfried Wagner's orchestral concerts, this gentleman and his soloists, who wished to enjoy the twenty minutes' walk from the concert-hall to the hotel, and had therefore dismissed the car, were accompanied the entire distance by several hundred of these enthusiastic "Backfische," as picturesque an escort as one could easily find, a characteristic, friendly swarm of pretty, giggly, blushing Saxon fifteen-year-olds. Arrived at the hotel, however, it turned out that almost every one of them had "an ax to grind," in the form of a purchased post-card photograph of Siegfried Wagner which she wished signed. This one persecuted celebrity was more than prepared for them with a very courteous but practical solution of an otherwise impossible situation. He informed the girls that all photos sent to his Bayreuth home with return stamp and address would be promptly signed and remailed. That was all.

Dresden and Hamburg seem to produce more opera-enthusiastic "Backfische" to the square inch than any other cities of the writer's experience. Not but what these German "pan-fish" are first cousins to the "matinée girl," etc., of other lands, yet outside of Germany they are seldom known to screw up their courage to

anything more radical than a little secret letter-writing, whereas in Hamburg at least scores of them will hang about the stage-door during a rehearsal and wait with unspeakable patience for this or that favorite to appear and be escorted to his or her place of residence. They are partial to tenors, to be sure, here as elsewhere, yet one of their very particular idols in Hamburg a few years ago was a poorly paid and rather homely little soubrette of the *Volksoper* with a sharp nose and a sharp tongue—a good singer and a personality on and off the stage—rather feared by her colleagues, but literally adored by the “Backfische.” She was seldom seen on the street without a bevy of them accompanying her. Baritones and basses, for some strange reason, are rarely favorites with them. I doubt even if Max Lohfing, the veteran *basso profundo* of the Hamburger Stadttheater, has ever been “escorted”; and yet to what extent Lohfing has very deservedly gained the popularity of the general public in well-nigh thirty years of service, can be best illustrated by the following: An old patrician dame, at one of Caruso’s brilliant *Gastspiele* in 1913, is supposed to have commented very audibly: “Ich finde unser Lohfing singt genau so laut!” (“I can’t see that he sings any louder than our Lohfing!”)

It is interesting to note that ovations in German opera houses are generally the work of a relatively small percentage of the general public, made up of the personal friends or particular admirers of the artists in question, and are almost invariably reserved for the end of the act, or better still for the end of the performance. The author recalls that in Hamburg, for instance, about 10 per cent. of the public used to remain, standing, after every good performance, and clapping and shouting like mad until the “eiserne Vorhang” (the iron curtain) had been lowered as a signal for them to go home, only then to redouble their efforts until their favorites had been forced to creep through the tiny door of the “eiserne Vorhang” at least twice or thrice, to receive the crowning “send-off” of the evening. In this light it may be easier to understand what we alluded to at the beginning, viz., that it is well-nigh impossible to measure northern as over against southern applause by the yard. The important thing is, that the motives of the applause differ. In the North, as we have seen it is more a question of the personal cult, in the South, of the immediate impression of the moment.

It just happens (although this case is too exceptional, almost unique, to prove anything) that the longest and warmest ovation the author has ever witnessed was given by a public at least four-

fifths Teutonic to Dr. Hans Richter in the Festspielhaus of Bayreuth, at his good-by performance of *Die Meistersinger* in 1912, his conscious and deliberate farewell for all time to his beloved orchestra. Nor was it a question there of a part of the public only: the whole packed house stood on its feet for fully thirty minutes by the watch, shouting and clapping continually in unabated frenzy. Yet the old master would not and *did* not appear before the curtain. One could only conjecture what he was doing back there behind it all that time: scolding violently, in all probability, to keep his tears back. At all events it is safe to say that if he had appeared, he would have broken down and cried like a baby, and that he knew it.

In conclusion, a brief comparison of the reaction of Italian publics to the singing of Teutons, with the corresponding reaction of Germans to Italian singing. There is really but one thing which the Italian will not put up with in the foreign singer, the so-called "fischio di vapore," in a woman's high notes, which has unfortunately been heard so often in Italy from only Teutonic throats (Italian women have plenty of other glaring defects, but never this one) that even certain Italian Maestri di Canto have become convinced that the "voce inglese," as they call it, is an organic racial defect. That is of course all nonsense. The best pedagogues in and out of Italy have long since known that it is none other than a question of faulty production, and our very many successful women singers, past and present, with perfectly flexible and vibrant high notes, many of whom have also triumphed in Italy and been well paid for it, are the best possible proof that this view is correct. And yet two great obstacles, and only two, still remain in the way of many of our American girls who wish to begin an operatic career in Italy: this same "fischio di vapore" and the vice of paying, sometimes large sums of money, for the privilege of singing before an Italian public. I do not wish to preach, but will merely suggest that our girls think it over very seriously for themselves before going to Italy, as to whether these two matters should not be fundamentally changed, and how best to go about it.

Aside from the above there is practically no prejudice of any sort in Italy against foreign singers; on the contrary, the really serious foreign artist is often held up by the Italians themselves to their own native singers as an example of studiousness and "intelligenza." In general, other conditions being equal, the foreigner will find it easier, for very obvious reasons, to meet Italian competition successfully in the French or German reper-

toire, rather than in the purely Italian, but even for the latter foreigners are constantly being chosen, if they are really better artists, in preference to Italians.

Few Italian women singers have been successful in Germany. The German reciprocates in that little matter of the "fischio di vapore" by saying that nearly all the Italian ladies shriek their high notes instead of singing them. Whether he be justified for this verdict or not—in extreme cases at least, it is conceivable—that is his standpoint, and he is very quietly disposed to abide by it. He likes Italian male singers infinitely better, in fact, few such have gone on record as unsuccessful in Germany, and a great many have been heard, off and on, though only as guests, of course, and always in their own language. Strange to say, "il grande" Tamagno was perhaps the one and only really great one whom they did not like, anywhere in Germany, so much so that they still indignantly *schimpfen* (scold) whenever his name is mentioned. They say that he had a voice of phenomenal power, of course, but that he was a "Schreihs" and no artist, "und damit basta!" Now Tamagno was undoubtedly the greatest "declamatore" in music that Italy ever produced, the man who brought Richard Wagner's own ideal of incisive dramatic diction to a higher degree of perfection than perhaps any other singer the modern world has known. Strange irony of fate, that just he, who had so nearly—even if quite unconsciously—realized a purely German ideal, should have been condemned by Germans. The only possible explanation proves to be a surprisingly simple one: the Germans love Italian *bel canto*, and for generations have associated *bel canto* very intimately with the Italian name. If an Italian singer visits them, they expect him to delight their ears with mellowness and sonority of tone as such, with the pure tonal beauty of a perfect instrument. They do not understand the words anyway, so diction for them, in this case, has become a negligible quantity.

VICTOR MAUREL : HIS CAREER AND HIS ART

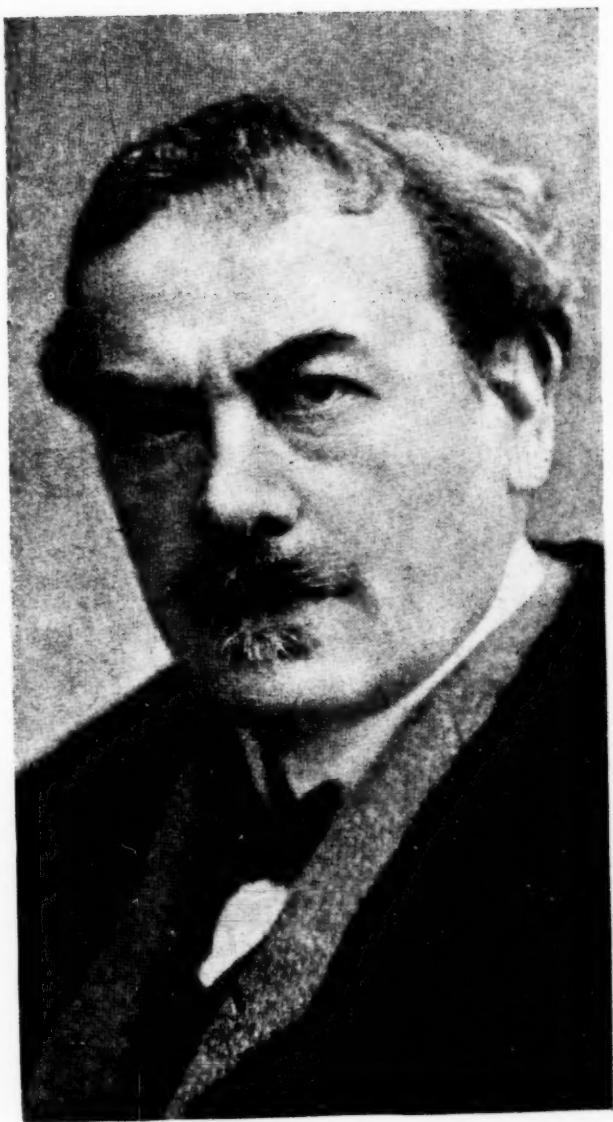
By FRANCIS ROGERS

I

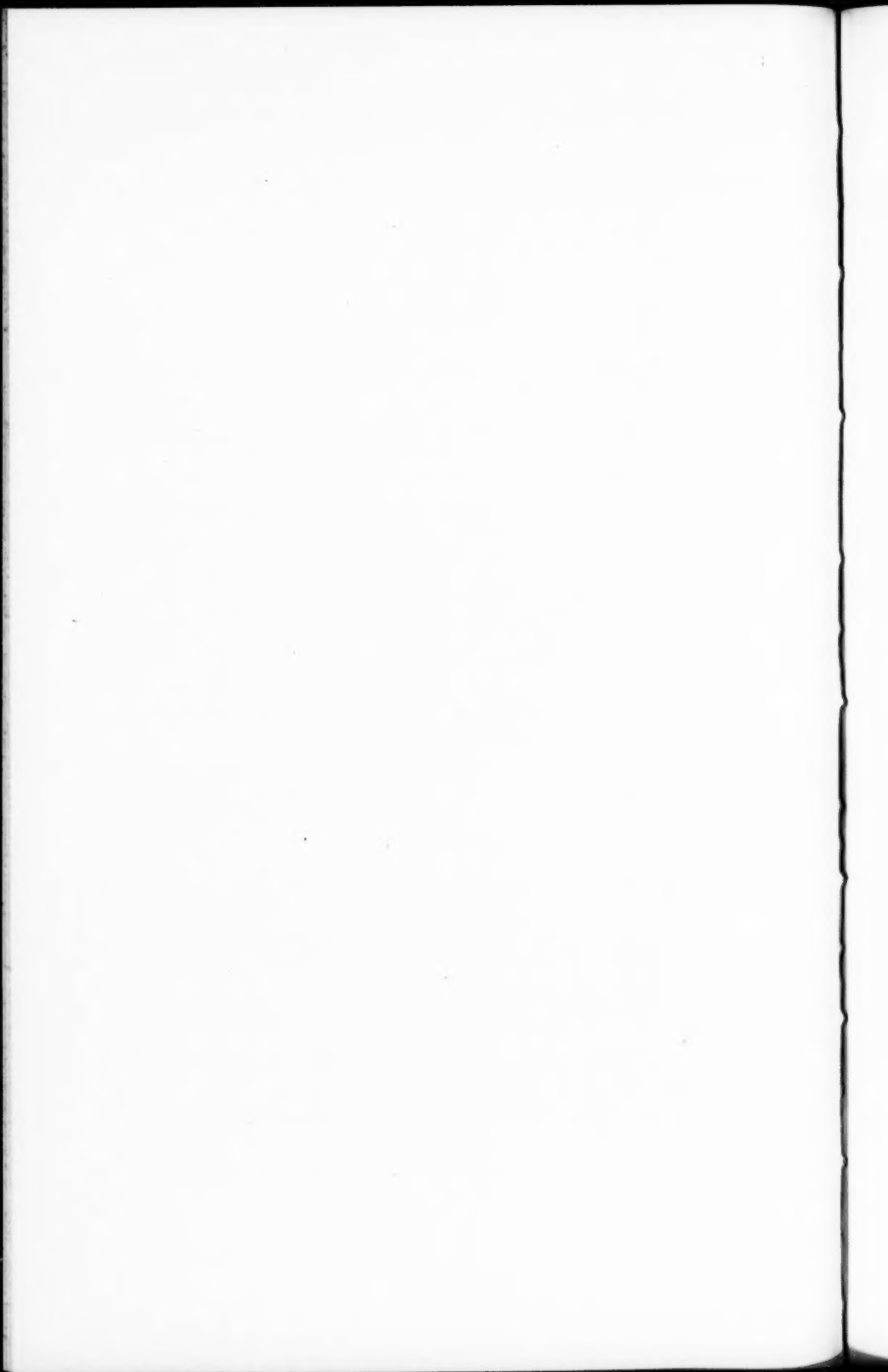
THE actor and the singer have much in common, including the ephemeral natures of their respective arts. The play they have played and the opera or the song they have sung exist only as a memory in the minds of their hearers, fading into a gradual oblivion. The actors and singers of especial note find a more lasting memorial in the written records of their day, which will transmit to coming generations at least a faint shadow and reverberation of their quality. The phonograph is still too imperfect an instrument to record truthfully the quality of a voice. Some voices record better than others, but the very best records do scarcely more than suggest or recall the beauty of the original sound. So it is that the names of even the most loved and admired performers are writ in water.

This generalization is more valid in America, where an ever-changing and unreflecting public constantly seeks new favorites, than it is in Europe, with its long artistic history and its greater loyalty to tradition. When Victor Maurel died in 1923 probably the majority of the *habitués* of the Metropolitan Opera House recalled hardly more than his name, with occasionally, among the older ones, a dim memory of some of his impersonations. Yet it was to Maurel that Verdi himself referred when he queried, "Was there ever such a complete artist?" After hearing him Wagner cried, "Friends, come, salute a great artist!" Even Jean Faure, his immediate predecessor at the Paris Opéra, admitted his greatness, and Lilli Lehmann presented him to the Berlin public as a model for all lyric actors. Our own Gatti-Casazza, whose enthusiasms are seldom exuberant, writes, "I have never heard anything but praise of Maurel's art." Certainly, then, it is worth while to review with some care the career of such a preëminent artist as this, not only for the interest of reading the story of his many triumphs, but also in the hope that we may discover in the story some of the secrets of his art:

"Hints of the proper craft, tricks of the tool's true play."



Victor Maurel



Victor Maurel was born in Marseilles in 1848. His father was an architect of sufficient distinction to have drawn the first plans for Monte Carlo and the boy seems to have been brought up in a more or less artistic atmosphere. Probably, too, he was taken to Italy and learned early to know and love its language and its art. He studied for a time at the *École des Arts et Métiers* in the ancient city of Aix, and at the age of seventeen entered the Conservatory of Music of Marseilles. Two years later he passed to the Conservatory of Paris, where, in 1868, he won both the prize for singing and the prize for opera. One of his teachers was Auguste Gevaert (1828-1908), the great authority on eighteenth-century music, to whom Maurel owed much of his extraordinary familiarity with the best traditions of that period. As a prize-winner he became automatically a member of the Paris Opéra, but he found in that reactionary institution but little opportunity or inspiration for the realization of his ambitions. All its performances carried the heavy weight of the dead hand of tradition—they still do, I am told—and, what was even more unpropitious for Maurel's prospects and development, Jean Faure, who for years had been the *beau idéal* of the Paris public, was still the leading baritone, as well as the dominant figure, and probably but little disposed to let a younger man of exceptional promise sing his rôles.

Nevertheless, after some waiting Maurel had an unexpected chance to sing the Count in *Le Trouvère* and, a little later, Nevers in *Les Huguenots*. It is not recorded in what fashion he performed these rôles, but his subsequent course implies that it did not stir appreciably the thick atmosphere of the Opéra. Dissatisfied with his prospects in Paris, he obtained leave of absence and went to Italy, where (in 1869) he made his Italian début at La Pergola in Florence as Nevers, singing in Italian. He must have made a good impression, for in the following year he was, despite his youth and inexperience, engaged at La Scala in Milan, the most important Italian opera house in Europe, to create a part in a new opera, *Il Guarany*, by the Brazilian composer, Gomez. It is clear that the young French singer was much to the liking of the Italians, also that Italy and the Italian career were much to his, for now, having secured his full release from Paris, he made frequent appearances in Rome, Naples, Florence, Trieste and Venice in a repertory that included *Don Carlos* (Verdi), *La Favorita*, *Don Giovanni*, *Rigoletto*, *Ruy Blas* (Marchetti), and *Lohengrin* (in Italian, of course). So, before he was twenty-four he was a well-known and admired singer in the principal opera houses of the new-born kingdom of Italy, and till the end of his career

Italy remained his second fatherland, and Milan, even more than Paris, his artistic home.

These three years in Italy were highly important in determining the trend of Maurel's career. France was in the throes of the war with Germany, which brought the grandiose system of the Empire crashing to the ground. At its conclusion the nation, impoverished and disillusioned, could barely struggle to its feet. Naturally enough, the operatic tide was at its lowest ebb. Meyerbeer and Rossini, the old gods of the Opéra, actually dead, figuratively dying, had no successors more inspiring than the elegant Gounod and the amiable Thomas. The situation was not promising. Conditions in Italy were far different. After a long and heroic struggle Vittorio Emanuele had been crowned in Rome king of a united nation. Youth, hope and energy were in the saddle. Symbolic of his country's spirit, Verdi was now approaching the full maturity of his genius in *Aida* (1871). In the early seventies Italy was certainly the field for a young singer of ambition and inspiration and Maurel was wise to identify himself with its movement upward and forward.

He was equally wise in realising that Italy was the immemorial home of the art of *bel canto*, which is eternally the foundation upon which a successful lyric artist must build his technique. In those days there were still surviving many singers of the Rossini-Bellini-Donizetti school, familiar with its best traditions. Maurel, always an eager and untiring student, sat at their feet and under their tuition developed the marvelous vocal technique that was to stand him in such good stead when, later, he brought the art of lyric interpretation to its apogee in the rôles of Iago, Falstaff and Don Juan.

In 1872 an opportunity to visit far countries presented itself and Maurel, under the management of Strakosch, together with Christine Nilsson, then second in fame to Adelina Patti alone, and Victor Capoul, sailed for the United States. He spent fifteen months in this country, interrupted by a short season in London, but as he makes only a passing reference to this visit in his "Dix Ans de Carrière," and as I have found no account of it elsewhere, I am inclined to think that it was a barn-storming expedition, enjoyable to an adventurous young man, but of slight importance in his artistic development.¹

¹Maurel's New York début was made at the Academy of Music, October, 1873 (five days after his American début in Brooklyn), as Valentino in *Faust*. The *N. Y. Times* said of it: "Mr. Maurel's Valentino . . . is unquestionably the most striking male character in *Faust*."

In the course of the next four years he visited most of the capitals of Europe, except Paris, singing an ever-increasing repertory with ever-growing mastery of his art. London, Dublin, Cairo and St. Petersburg all came to know him. His visits to London were especially valuable to him. Henry Irving was then in his full prime and by his thoroughness and extraordinary intelligence of method appealed strongly to Maurel, who hitherto had known Shakespeare only through the medium of the French language, psychology and technique. Irving's influence upon him was profoundly beneficial. Wagner, too, came within Maurel's orbit. Wagner heard him sing *The Flying Dutchman* (in Italian) and was so favorably impressed that he asked him to come to see him. Maurel found the composer seated at the piano and, at his request, sang several passages from the same opera. When he finally stopped, Wagner, deeply moved, arose and drew a curtain at the end of the room, revealing the principal members of Maurel's troupe, whom he had assembled. Addressing them, Wagner spoke in the highest terms of Maurel's performance, saying that no other singer had ever penetrated so deeply into the meaning of the part.

Still another strong influence of this period was that of a richly gifted but erratic Russian, named Sprint, with whom Maurel plunged enthusiastically into the study of drawing, color, pose, gesture, mimetics, costume—everything, in fact, that could bear, even remotely, upon the development of his art.

In 1879, after nearly ten years of absence, Maurel made his *rentrée* at the Paris Opéra in Ambroise Thomas's *Hamlet*. Conditions were much more favorable than they had been at the time of his début. Vaucorbeil, an admirable musician and director, was in charge. Faure, though still in the full enjoyment of his artistic means, had retired from the stage and been replaced by Jean Lassalle. In his youth Lassalle must have possessed enjoyable qualities, for he was highly praised by his contemporaries and was the inspiration of a number of important rôles; but when he appeared at the Metropolitan some twenty years later there was but little in his performance to admire; the enjoyment one might have derived from his resonant voice and evidence of physical power was destroyed by his roughness of style and his inability to sing in tune. It is hard to believe that he could ever have been considered a rival of Maurel. Maurel was only thirty years of age, but for ten years he had been accumulating a wealth of knowledge and experience that fitted him now to stand comparison with the best anywhere.

Vaucorbeil had wished him to make his *rentrée* in *Don Juan*, but Maurel preferred *Hamlet* for his ordeal. For us English-speaking people any French version of *Hamlet* is hopelessly inadequate, and Thomas's version certainly may be so characterized; but in France it is even now considered worthy of a place in the repertory of every opera house. There is no denying, too, that several of the scenes are strong enough to offer to the protagonist a good opportunity for the display of his dramatic powers. Although the name-part had been written for Faure, who was held to be incomparable in it, Maurel being thoroughly familiar with Henry Irving's impersonation, permeated his own interpretation with an understanding of the English Shakespeare that few, if any, French actors have ever possessed. His success with the public was immediate, and he was generally acclaimed as a lyric actor of indubitable merit, second to Faure only.

Maurel's second appearance was in *Don Juan* (in French, of course), and although the vast auditorium was badly adapted to the subtleties of Mozart's masterpiece, his performance was highly praised. His next rôle was Mephisto in Gounod's *Faust*, which, despite its low vocal tessitura and the fact that it was one of Faure's most admired parts, was praised for its subtlety and originality of treatment.

In the course of his engagement Maurel sang other standard rôles, and it is also recorded that occasionally he appeared at the *Théâtre des Variétés* with Jeanne Granier and Victor Capoul in Offenbach's *Le Violoneux*. Most important, perhaps, of all was his performance of Amonasro under Verdi's own baton. Paris had not yet heard *Aida*, although for eight years past it had been the operatic sensation of Europe, and Vaucorbeil had induced Verdi to supervise and conduct the *première*. Verdi was at once struck by the vigor and insight of Maurel's performance and this coöperation with him in *Aida* established between the two men a friendship and a mutual admiration that were of immeasurable importance in the development of the careers of both.

Verdi was at the time rewriting *Simone Boccanegra*, and soon after their meeting engaged Maurel to sing the title-rôle. Not even Verdi and Maurel in collaboration could transform this opera into a masterpiece, but its performance at La Scala the following year evoked from Verdi the following tribute to Maurel's performance: in writing to a friend, he said, "It's a pity you did not come to Milan, for, if you had, you would have seen an altogether extraordinary actor-singer. Maurel is a *Simone Boccanegra* whose equal I shall never see."

Maurel had never been satisfied with operatic conditions in Paris and in 1883 he put into execution a long-considered project for a theater of his own that should exemplify his ideas of the proper production of opera. He called his theater "Le Théâtre Italien," and engaged a company of singers that comprised such splendid artists as Sembrich, Calvé, Gayarré, Jean and Edouard de Reszké. The season opened November 27 (1883) with *Simone Boccanegra*, followed during the next eighteen months by a comprehensive repertory of standard operas and several new works, among which the only one of lasting importance was, perhaps, Massenet's *Hérodiade*. Into this enterprise Maurel poured all his enthusiasm, all his energy, all his accumulation of artistic experience; also all his savings of fifteen years.

The artistic results were considerable, the financial results were—disaster. Seven millions of francs had been spent, but the public would not support the venture and when the theater finally closed its doors Maurel, who when they first opened was rich, was a poor man. Fortunately, his artistic value was greater than ever and he resumed at once his career as a salaried singer. After a tour in Spain he sang for two seasons at the Opéra-Comique in a repertory that included *L'Étoile du Nord*, *Zampa* and *Le Songe d'une Nuit d'Élé*.

February 5, 1887, is a memorable date in operatic history, for it is that of the first performance of Verdi's *Otello*. There has probably never been so rich a combination of preëminent qualities in the creation and performance of any other opera. Underlying it all was the Shakespearean tragedy itself, translated into Italian and moulded into operatic form by Arrigo Boito, scholar, man of letters, poet, musician—perhaps the greatest of all librettists. The composer was Giuseppe Verdi, the merit of whose previous operas already entitled him to a place in the Hall of Fame together with Handel, Gluck, Mozart and Wagner. Unquestionably, too, Verdi had a considerable share in the adaptation of the original tragedy to his needs. The backer of the production was the publisher, Giulio Ricordi, whose keen mind and expert knowledge of every practical detail of opera rendered him an invaluable collaborator. The name-part was entrusted to Francesco Tamagno, a man of enormous physical vigor with a trumpet-toned tenor voice to match. There was nothing subtle about his vocal or mimetic methods, but the rôle, which had been written for him, demanded nothing of him that he did not possess and the endless pains that Verdi and Boito had taken in teaching him his part made of him an Othello not greatly inferior to that of his mighty

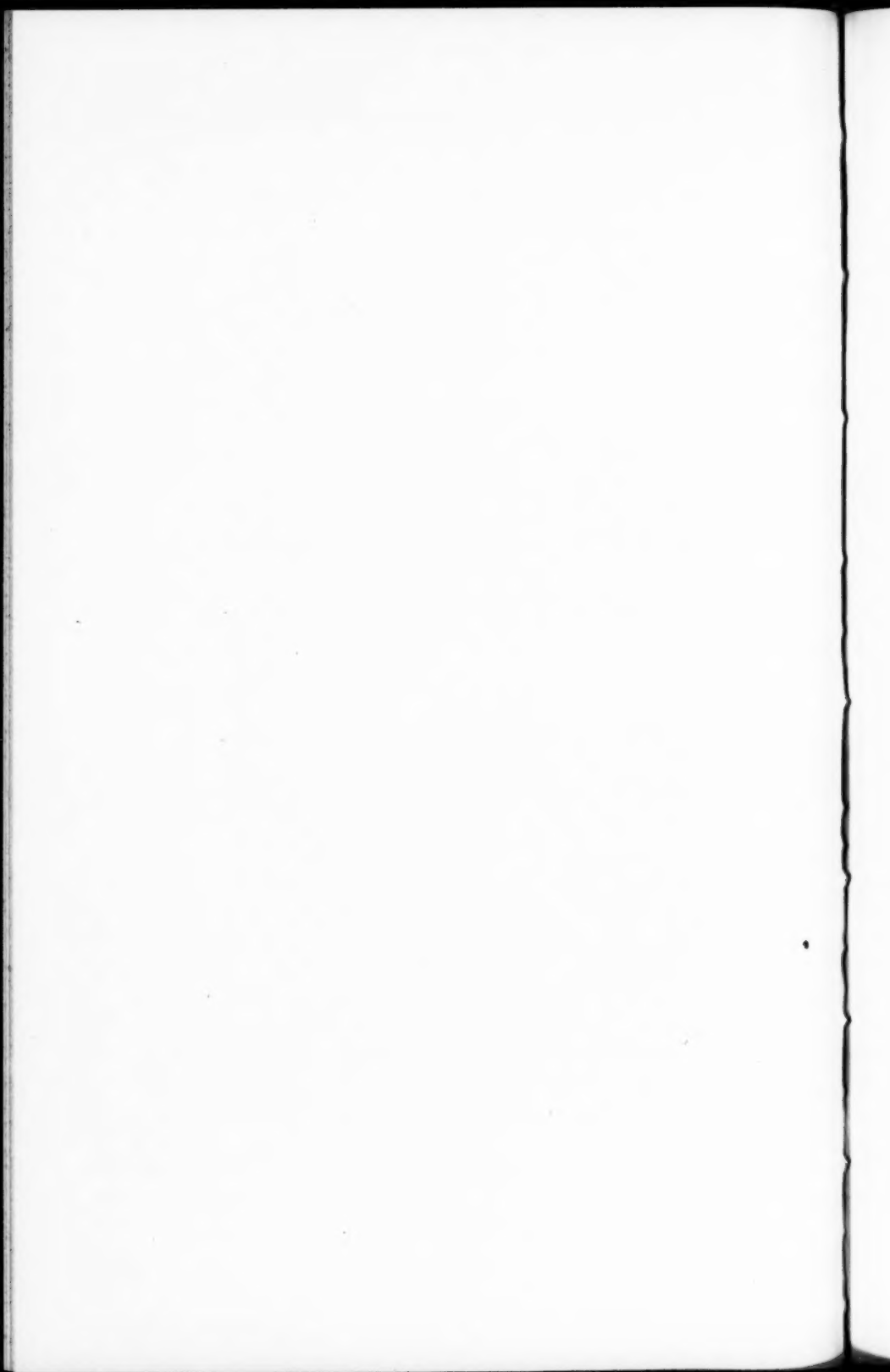
compatriot, Tommaso Salvini. The bluntness of his intellect and general bearing served to enhance Maurel's infinite keenness and subtlety. The coöperation of such a group of men as these could not fail to produce something epoch-making, and the public immediately recognized the extraordinary merit of the opera and of its performance. On the strength of its reception in Milan, the opera, with its original cast was taken on tour and everywhere was received with enthusiasm, although its lack of arias for vocal display prevented it, and will always prevent it, from being a popular success like *Il Trovatore* and *Aida*. In London it was given in Irving's own theater, The Lyceum, where Maurel had seen Irving play so many parts, including Iago. Would that we knew just what Irving thought of Maurel's performance!

The first performance of *Otello*, so outstanding in the history of opera, marks also the entrance of Maurel upon the most important period of his career, during which he was to have ample opportunity to put into execution the results of his years of unremitting and intelligent study. A series of articles written by him at various times and brought together in one volume under the title of "Dix Ans de Carrière" furnishes us with much informative matter and gives us a vivid insight into the workings of his ever active mind. He was now the preëminent acting singer in the French and Italian operatic field and every opera house was open to him. South America, North America, England, France and Italy heard him in all his great rôles during the remaining years of the dying century.

In 1892 *Pagliacci* had its first performance at the *Dal Verme* Theater in Milan. Aroused by the overwhelming success of *Cavalleria Rusticana*, Sonzogno, the Italian publisher, offered a prize for the best opera of the length of *Cavalleria*, promising it a public performance. *Pagliacci* was awarded the prize, but as no one was confident of its success with the public, there was considerable difficulty in arranging for its production. Verdi and Maurel were working over *Falstaff* in Milan at the time and Sonzogno turned to them for help. Verdi recommended as conductor a young cellist, then a member of the orchestra at La Scala and quite unknown to fame—Arturo Toscanini. After some hesitation Maurel agreed to sing the part of Tonio, provided that Leoncavallo would add a prolog to his score. Both suggestions were accepted and *Pagliacci* entered on its career of popularity. Maurel does not refer to the opera in his reminiscences and I doubt whether he sang in it after its early days. There is no record of his ever appearing in it in this country.



Victor Maurel as Falstaff



Verdi had the writing of a comic opera in mind as early as 1866, Maurel tells us, but it was not until after the production of *Otello* that he definitely undertook the task, with Shakespeare again as his inspiration. A promising libretto of *The Taming of the Shrew* was submitted to him by Maurel in 1890, but he rejected it. Two years later he confided to Maurel that Boito and he had almost completed an operatic version of the story of *Falstaff* and that they counted on him, Maurel, for the title-rôle. At once Maurel proceeded to immerse himself in all the lore surrounding the historic and the Shakespearean Falstaff, laying a solid foundation for his impersonation. Before long Verdi sent him the score, writing, "Study the libretto as much as you like, but do not bother too much about the music. If the musical setting of the text is right in spirit, the character of the personage properly grasped and the verbal accent correct, the music will go of itself." Although Maurel, like Verdi, had never given public evidence of the possession of a gift for comedy, the unfamiliar task did not daunt him. In January, 1893, stage-rehearsals began. Verdi, now eighty years of age, was in full charge. Maurel writes, "He plunged into the work with incredible ardor and astonished us all by his energy. Every instant in the thick of it, he stimulated the powers of his interpreters to the very limit of their capacities. By his prodigious zest he got out of them more than they themselves even had ever suspected was there." On the 9th of February, 1893, the première took place at La Scala amid the hearty plaudits of an audience that included all the greatest personages in the operatic world. The performance was a triumph for all concerned and the next day all the opera houses in Italy were eager to add the new masterpiece to their repertory. In April it was given at the Opéra-Comique in a French translation made by Boito himself and Paul Solanges, with Maurel as the Fat Knight, assisted by members of the regular troupe. The production was received favorably by the Parisians. Of the translation Maurel says: "It was as good as possible. Does that mean that it was as good as the original Italian? I answer resolutely, No! The structure of the French language and, consequently, its particular quality render it inferior to Italian for the lyric stage."

Just as Shakespeare in *The Tempest* brought his life's work to a serenely lovely close, so Verdi, after a long life of hard work, sorrow, failure and success, sums it all up in a setting of the merriest of comic tales. Though his melodic gift was not so prolific as of old, there is no other sign of weakening, and to-day, after thirty-three years of life, "Falstaff" remains as young

and spontaneous as *Il Barbiere* itself, the masterpiece of the boy Rossini.

The next ten years, which conclude Maurel's public career, were as active as any of their predecessors. They were especially interesting to us Americans because they brought him repeatedly to this country and gave us ample opportunity to enjoy his fully ripened art in his best rôles. The spring usually took him to London, the fall to Paris; his visits to Italy became less frequent.

Especially memorable was a production at the Opéra-Comique of *Don Juan* under his own direction, with Lucien Fugère as Leporello, Edmond Clément as Don Ottavio and Marie Delna as Zerlina. In 1900 he made his last creation, *Le Juif Polonais* by Camille Erlanger, at the Opéra-Comique. This was an operatic version of the melodrama, "The Bells," which offered such fine opportunities to the talents of Henry Irving, and it is likely that Irving's success with the piece was at the bottom of the attempt to make an opera of it, but even Maurel's extraordinary powers of characterization could not breathe the breath of life into it and, after a gallant attempt to establish it in the repertory of the house, it was dropped once and for all.

It was in this period that Maurel offered himself to the public as a singer of songs and achieved in this field, too, a remarkable success, on which I shall comment more fully later in this article. He also took part in one performance of a spoken comedy—*Je ne sais quoi*, by Croisset, at the *Capucines*—but one only performance sufficed to convince him that his training as a singer of grand opera quite unfitted him for light comedy, and he never repeated the experiment. Of sentimental interest was a visit to Berlin under the auspices of his old colleague, Lilli Lehmann, who, to acquaint the Germans with the nature of his gifts and achievements, arranged some recitals for him and translated into German and published his "Dix Ans de Carrière."

The long career was drawing to a close with the century. Although Maurel showed no visible signs of physical weakness, his voice was becoming less reliable. Younger singers were crowding the veterans off the stage; the public taste was veering towards Wagner and Puccini at the expense of Mozart and Verdi. Recognizing that the time had come for him to stop, Maurel opened in 1902 in Paris a studio for the teaching of singing. He also gave courses in "vocal and scenic esthetics" at the *Collège des hautes Études sociales*. But, despite his great experience as a singer and his profound study of the theory of singing, his lack of the *sine qua non* of an efficient teacher, the ability to impart knowledge,

prevented him from achieving successful results in the unfamiliar field. In 1908 he established in New York a "Conservatoire d'Art Lyrique" and it was in New York that he passed the remainder of his years. His serious, even reverential, way of approach to the study of "lyric art" was discouraging to young America, who believes that all one needs in order to achieve a sensational career is a strong voice and a year or two of study under a well-advertised teacher. So it came about that his pupils were few and his influence on the rising generation of singers not nearly so potent as it should have been. In the early part of the Great War he sang for the last time at the Metropolitan in a benefit concert. The old spirit and the old art were there still, but there was too little voice left to indicate to those who had never heard him in his younger days that they were listening to one of the greatest singers in musical history.

He had always had a real interest in painting and design, and now, in his old age, he passed many tranquil hours before his easel, brush and palette in hand. In 1919 he was asked to design the scenery for a production of Gounod's *Mireille* at the Metropolitan and received much praise for the expert and artistic manner in which he executed the order. But the burden of his years was now weighing heavy upon him and his increasing physical infirmities withdrew him more and more from his usual haunts. His mind was as active as ever and occasionally he would work a little with some ambitious student, but his tale was told and finally in 1923, in his New York home, he breathed his last.

II

Even those readers of these pages to whom Maurel's name has hitherto been unknown must agree that his career was an extraordinarily brilliant one and that not only his personal achievements, but also his close intimacy with Verdi and his right as a creative collaborator to share in the fame of that operatic genius during his final and greatest period, makes it well worth while that at least the outlines of that career should be recorded in some detail. Further, there are many useful lessons to be drawn from this same career, for its successes were honestly won and point the right road to all aspiring singers. Richly gifted as Maurel was by nature, it was his unrelenting effort to develop his gifts to their utmost and his fidelity to the highest artistic standards that made him what he was, the outstanding acting singer of his epoch.

Maurel was certainly "a fine figure of a man"—"*un solide gas de Provence*," says his son.¹ He was about six feet in height and perhaps one hundred and ninety or two hundred pounds in weight. I never saw him till 1895, when he was in full maturity, but even then, though broad across the shoulders, he was as lean and supple as a young athlete. This slenderness, so rare among successful singers, was due not so much to nature as to his determination to embody his rôles as perfectly as in him lay. One of the first requisites of singing is physical vigor; no audience cares either to listen to or to look at a singer who in any way suggests a lack of health. The act of singing demands of the singer a well adjusted physical machine with plenty of driving power behind it. Such a machine craves more fuel than it really needs and if its possessor be not watchful and self-denying, he will soon become the possessor of a double chin and a paunch entirely inappropriate to the singing of youthful and romantic parts. When Maurel was at the Metropolitan he was surrounded by a group of his contemporaries that included the two De Reszkés, Plançon and Lassalle, all of them as corpulent as aldermen—Édouard de Reszké weighed 285 pounds!—and all tending towards shortness of breath. When Maurel was with them he looked, despite his powerful frame, as slender as a boy. He himself used to say: "Before being an art, the profession of a lyric actor is a sport. To perform such exacting rôles as Rigoletto, Falstaff and Don Juan requires the endurance and the elasticity of an athlete." He had had to find this out for himself, but, the worth of the idea once established in his mind, he was indefatigable in putting it into practise. He studied the art of fencing with the best fencers in France and Italy and even wrote a little treatise on it. He was familiar with the French *savate*, Swedish gymnastics, and wrestling. He was a student of boxing under our own Professor James Corbett, whom he admired for his "*qualités de souplesse, d'élégance et de rapidité*." It all took time, but the time was well spent, for it preserved for him the vigor and the appearance of youth well into old age. Beautiful were his long and shapely legs. It was said that in reality he was knock-kneed—an assertion that gains in credibility by reason of the fact that he never stood with his knees together: at rest, they were always well apart, the forward knee bent.

His face had no real beauty. His eyelids drooped a little, his nose was short and broad, his chin was heavy. His mouth

¹"Victor Maurel : Ses Idées—Son Art," par Berty Maurel.

was large, but the infinite pains that he had taken to perfect his utterance had developed in the muscles of and around his lips such mobility that one became fascinated by the play, by the mere visible eloquence of his mouth. Whether his hands were beautiful in themselves I do not know, but they were as eloquent as his mouth. He was a master of the art of gesture and even in informal conversation used his hands constantly to supplement or even to take the place of vocal utterance. Every pose, every movement of his body made its contribution to the precise expression of his thought or emotion.

It is not easy for me to describe Maurel's voice, for if I describe it in full frankness I run the risk of lessening the credibility of my assertion that it was the most expressive voice I ever heard. To begin with, it was in range a baritone, though he could impart to it the tenderness and variety of a tenor or the weight and dignity of a bass. He himself objected to having his voice classified as if it were an instrument in an orchestra. In listening to him, I seldom thought of him as being a vocalist in the ordinary sense; his voice to me was merely an integral part of his complete means of self-expression, of exteriorizing what was in his mind. His early training was of course according to the standards of the time, of which Jean Faure (1830-1914) was the great exemplar. For many years this remarkable singer, whose name is known in this country only as that of the composer of the Palm Sunday song known as "The Palms," was the idol of the Parisian public and a favorite in England and Italy, too. Handsome, ambitious, intelligent and dowered with a noble bass-baritone voice, he delighted his hearers by the elegance of his style and the perfection of his technique. He was, perhaps, a sort of combination of the fine qualities of his younger compatriots, Plançon and Renaud, both well remembered in New York. What he probably lacked was the rugged vitality and the burning intensity that belong to Italy, rather than to France. These Italian qualities Maurel possessed, in addition to those of his own country, and his early departure from Paris for Italy seems to indicate that he felt that he could fully develop his art in Italy only.

His vocal researches in Italy enabled him to master the use of *mezza voce* to a degree of perfection attained by no other singer that I have heard. To his full voice, never really powerful, he added a penetrating quality that enabled him to sing on virtually even terms with such Stentors as Tamagno and Édouard de Reszké. His attack, his *messa di voce*, his *coloratura*, were as facile as a lyric soprano's.

It is thought that another famous artist of the last century, Pauline Viardot-Garcia, impaired the natural beauty of her voice by her ceaseless efforts to increase its range and power and I am inclined to think that excess of zeal in Maurel too was accountable in his case—in his later years, anyway—for a loss of focus in his upper range. Beginning in 1895, I heard him sing often and in probably all his repertory of that epoch, and on no occasion were his upper notes perfectly secure when sung in full voice. From what period of his career this weakness dated I have no means of knowing—his son does not mention the weakness—but the fact remains that in the last years of his singing life he sang frequently and unmistakably flat in his upper register. In most singers such a defect would have robbed me of all enjoyment of their singing, as it certainly did in the case of Lassalle, but in Maurel's case, while I was cognizant of the defect, the perfection of the rest of his performance rendered me negligent of it.

In his later years Maurel lectured and wrote much on different phases of his art. His *magnum opus* is "Un Problème d'Art" (1893), in which he deals at some length with the question of voice-production. Space is lacking here to discuss fully his solution of the problem, but as the key to some of the secrets of his own preëminence, as well as much that should be helpful to all students, is to be found in this interesting volume, I shall try to summarize its chief conclusions.

The singer, according to Maurel, unlike other artists, is both the matter and the thought of his art. In him and not only through him is the power to express formed and completed. There are three qualities to be trained in the vocal mechanism: pitch (*hauteur*), power (*intensité*) and tone-color (*timbre*); the most essential of these, and the regulator of the other two, being tone-color. To try to achieve an exactly expressive tone through the conscious adjustment of the tongue, pharynx, etc., is absurd. Any sound uttered by the human voice may be the correct expression of a sentiment—love, hate, humility, pride, what you will—and in moments of complete spontaneity the vocal emission of even a totally untrained human being will be perfect from a technical point of view. But art, though the perfection of it is to conceal itself, is of necessity conscious, and the completely developed artist must be able consciously to hold the mirror up to nature.

The singer must, first of all, have a mental conception of what he wishes to express before he tries to express it. His auditive imagination must picture the tone to be sung. The auditive imagination acts directly on the pitch and the power of the voice,

as well as on its color. Somebody or other—Rossini, perhaps—has said that the three prime requisites for a singer are Voice, Voice and Voice. It would be truer to say that they are Ear, Ear and Ear. It is the auditive image of tone that is ultimately responsible for the correct emission of tone. From this it follows that the training of the voice should be primarily a training of the auditive imagination and that the study of tone-color (*timbre*) through all possible vowel formations, on all pitches and in all degrees of power, is the foundation on which vocal technique must be built. Tone-color is the very essence of expression, which, in turn, is the very essence of the art of singing. Not merely must the singer train his auditive imagination, but he must develop also all his imaginative functions, because the richer his powers of imagination the more he will have to express, the more tone-colors will be on his vocal palette. *Per contra*, what he lacks in imaginative power that also will he lack in vocal expressiveness. In Maurel's own phrase, "Our business is to comprehend, then to express." Tosi, the great *maestro* of the eighteenth century, foreshadowed Maurel's solution of the problem when he wrote, "Oh! how great a master is the heart! In a few lessons from it you learn the most beautiful expressions, the most refined taste; it even corrects the defects of nature; it softens a voice that is harsh, betters an indifferent one, and perfects a good one." Other seekers have arrived at the same conclusions,¹ but I know of no singer but Maurel who in the course of his active career has thought out and put into practise a theory of art so fundamental and far-reaching as this.

No singer was ever more devoted to his art than was Maurel. He held that the lyric actor must consecrate himself body and soul to his art both on and off the stage. In taking up a new rôle he plunged head over heels into his subject. Like Henry Irving, he wanted to know everything bearing on the matter in hand: the history of its epoch, its customs, characters and costumes. He consulted experts, he frequented libraries and museums. It was not until he had carefully plotted the background that he began to study the verbal and musical texts and to elaborate the details of his impersonation. In the search for verisimilitude he would try to live the part, thinking and acting in character even when away from his studio and the theater. He surrounded himself with sketches, models, samples of stuffs and costumes, weapons, wigs, etc., etc. What he enjoyed, perhaps, most of all was the painting, under the direction of his auditive imagination, of the

¹Cf. Clara Kathleen Rogers' "My Voice and I." MacClurg & Co., 1910.

vocal picture, the details of *timbre* and *nuance*. He would occasionally invite to his studio a group of carefully selected connoisseurs, to whom he would sing passages and phrases for their criticism. By now he knew thoroughly not only his own part, but also the part of every other singer in the cast and that of the orchestra, as well. There remained only the indispensable experience and drill of the stage-rehearsals.

"Grand Opera" so called, was dominated in the nineteenth century by two geniuses of the first magnitude, Wagner and Verdi, who, exactly contemporary, worked out their problems of development simultaneously, but independently. It would be futile to ascribe to either a superiority of musical genius, for one was as intensely German in his nature as the other was Italian, and the difference between them was one of kind and not of degree. Maurel knew both men and had sung the Dutchman, Wolfram and Telramund before he came under the personal influence of Verdi. Later he studied the performances at Bayreuth with close attention, for he recognized that Wagner was a man of enormous importance and that there was much for him, Maurel, to learn from him. It was not, therefore, through prejudice or chauvinism that he came to the conclusion that Wagner and his methods could never become thoroughly acclimated in Italy or France. As he came to know Verdi and to discuss with him the many questions that both of them had been pondering for so many years, he recognized in the older man the full efflorescence of the Latin musical genius and gave himself heart and soul to the task of expressing the gospel of opera according to Verdi.

Verdi's long experience had convinced him that the *dramatis personæ* are of the first importance and that the orchestra and the scenery but intensify the action of the drama as it is played on the stage. As early as 1851 *Rigoletto* revealed a composer of exceptional dramatic, as well as melodic, gifts, able to tell a poignant story with true theatric eloquence. Twenty years later, in *Aida*, he presented to the world an opera as near to being the ideal opera for the masses as any opera ever written. After another long lapse of time he brought forward *Otello*, in which, without sacrificing one whit of his clarity and straightforwardness, he soared away from the level of melodrama and the conventional form of Italian opera into the realm of high tragedy. It was one of the chief glories of Maurel's career that Verdi thought him worthy of being his companion on his journey upward. Without Maurel it seems possible that there might have been no *Otello* and probable that there would have been no *Falstaff*. In Maurel

Verdi discovered a highly cultivated and imaginative Frenchman, who, in addition to a thorough familiarity with all that was best in the lyric theaters of France and Italy, had studied Shakespeare in England under Henry Irving himself. From Angelo Mariani, a well qualified Italian conductor, he had learned much of German theory and practise. Wagner himself had taken an interest in him. In order to reach his full development Maurel needed just such an influence as Verdi could exert upon him, for without Verdi there would have been no medium through which he could express adequately his laboriously acquired artistic technique.

I should like to write at length of all the rôles in which I saw Maurel, but I shall limit myself to brief accounts of the three that may be said to illustrate the apogee of his powers—Iago, Falstaff and Don Juan.

I heard Maurel for the first time in Boston in February, 1895. The opera was *Otello*; Maurel was Iago, Tamagno, Othello. I was at that time a young and inexperienced student and had the idea that an opera singer was a vocalist and not much else. In five minutes Maurel had destroyed that illusion conclusively. When I left the theater that night I had learned that the ideal operatic artist—Maurel, for instance—must reinforce the most highly developed qualities of the singer with the most highly developed qualities of the actor. Tamagno and Maurel, the lion and the panther, crude emotions in a futile struggle with cold and pitiless intellect. It was high tragedy carried through with an overwhelming conviction and sweep. Maurel was the dominating personality of it all, the malignant embodiment of evil, as wilfully destructive in spirit as any Mephistopheles that ever trod the stage. In a performance of such sustained merit it is difficult to know what particular points to underline. One of the unforgettable climaxes was the "*Credo*," with its ferocious philosophy of negation. It left one cold with horror. Another masterpiece of interpretation was the report of Cassio's dream. Iago stood absolutely motionless behind the seated Othello, breathing into his ear in a sustained, amorous *mezza voce* the devastating tale of Desdemona's and Cassio's infidelity. It was an extraordinary vocal and histrionic feat. Another moment of great poignance was that when Othello, consumed by the fire of his jealousy and overwhelmed by the sense of disaster and his own impotence in face of it, swoons and the curtain falls, with Iago standing over the supine Moor, ready to crush him with his heel and crying in sinister triumph, "*Ecco il Leonel*"

I have just spoken of how Maurel was the dominating spirit of the whole performance. It would not be far from the truth if I said that when he was on the stage in any opera he was always the central figure, for he had an extraordinary capacity for drawing to himself the attention of his audiences. Gatti-Casazza corroborates me in this: he writes, "He was the center of the spectacle, even if he was silent and motionless; a center of radiation and attraction. I have rarely seen so powerful and continuous a domination of an audience." This domination he achieved through the force of his own personality only, for he was always "in the picture" and never tried to take the center of the stage when it was not his by right. No matter who was singing, when Maurel was on the stage, my eyes would constantly turn towards him. I recall, for instance, a performance of *Les Huguenots*, in which the two de Reszkés and Maurel took part. In the first act Jean was singing—as only he could sing it—the lovely air with viola *obbligato*. Maurel was seated at table, listening, apparently, with all his ears to Raoul's story and so intently did he listen that I found myself listening with his ears, not my own, and to-day, after twenty-five years, the memory of that scene recalls to me Maurel more vividly than de Reszké. One night in London I saw him by the sheer power of his personality bring an audience to its feet with a performance of the death of Valentine (in *Faust*) that made of that scene, which often passes unheeded, the climax of the evening's doings.

It is hard to believe that the tragedian who could enact Iago so cunningly could slip so happily into the skin of Falstaff, one of the monumentally comic figures in all drama, but Maurel performed the feat. I saw him do it twice in Boston (1895) and once in Paris (in French) two years later. He was the veritable incarnation of the Fat Knight. When he arose from his chair the earth beneath him groaned and trembled. (It is said that his physical Falstaff was modeled on a colossus whom he discovered in a restaurant in Milan and observed diligently for weeks till he had acquired for his own use all his peculiarities of movement.) His voice had become a fat man's voice, colored and mellowed by tuns of sack quaffed in ribald company. His scenes with Dame Quickly and the merry wives he carried off with infinite gusto. The two climaxes in the action—Falstaff's imprisonment and exit in the clothes basket, and his disillusion under Herne's Oak—were masterpieces of comic acting. Maurel's performance was as surprising to me as it was delightful, for I had hitherto thought him lacking in the comic sense. His Figaro

in *Le Nozze*, for instance, was heavy and colorless, and much inferior to that of the delicious Campanari. But nothing was lacking in his Falstaff: it was perfect.

Of all his rôles the one that displayed most comprehensively Maurel's great qualities was Don Juan, which I heard him sing a number of times in both Italian and French. The part had always appealed strongly to him and was well suited to his temperament. In comparing it with Iago, he used to say, "In Iago it is a question of technique; in Don Juan one of inspiration"; meaning that Iago had been clearly limned by Verdi and Boito, and that there was little or nothing for the performer to invent. Don Juan, on the contrary, in the form in which it has reached us, provides no definite instructions for its performance and has been interpreted in countless ways by the thousands of singers that have braved its difficulties. Its vocal range is short—scarcely over an octave—with no high and no low notes. Baritones not being recognized as such in Mozart's day, the part was written for "*basso*," and yet it was one of the most successful rôles of the first Manuel Garcia, a tenor.

Maurel tells us in his "*Mise-en-scène de Don Juan*" that in 1871 he heard a performance of the opera in Naples. The theater was small and shabby; the orchestra did not exceed thirty in number; the singers, except for the protagonist, were as inadequate as the scenery. And yet, despite all these unfavorable conditions, Maurel found the performance both interesting and enjoyable. Why he should be so impressed he could not then, or till years later, explain even to himself. Not long after this an elaborate production was proposed at the San Carlo in Naples, with Maurel as the Don. The rehearsals in the *foyer* went well, but as soon as they were transferred to the large stage Maurel felt that he was not achieving the effects he desired and that the whole performance was certain to miss fire. This feeling was so strong that he contrived to have the production indefinitely postponed. In the course of the following years he performed the part in Trieste, Florence, Milan, Paris, London and New York, so far as he could perceive, under the best possible conditions, but he found that the opera never made on the public the happy impression that the performance in Naples in 1871 had made on him. Finally, after puzzling over the matter for more than a score of years, in singing the rôle at the Metropolitan he arrived at an answer to the question: Don Juan was written for a small auditorium and in magnifying it to the dimensions of such theaters as the Metropolitan its peculiar eloquence is inevitably destroyed. The

soundness of this conclusion was confirmed when he heard a performance of *Le Nozze di Figaro* in the tiny Residenz-Theater in Munich, in which Mozart's operas had been performed in Mozart's own day. He was charmed as he had been charmed in Naples a quarter of a century earlier.

In 1896 Maurel had the chance to test still further the validity of his solution. The Paris Opéra announced a gala production of *Don Juan* (with Maurice Renaud as the Don, I think). Simultaneously, Maurel persuaded Carvalho, then in charge of the Opéra-Comique, to produce the same opera on the original scale, as conceived by Mozart himself, with Maurel as protagonist and stage-manager. The result was one of the most delightful productions of any opera that I ever saw. The orchestra consisted of twenty-six musicians only. These, in combination with the small auditorium, permitted the singers to obtain their vocal effects without any strain. Judicious cuts and an untraditional but reasonable grouping of the scenes kept the length of the performance within comfortable limits and added to the flow and coherence of the plot. The performance went with a spirit of understanding and happiness of ensemble that one witnesses but seldom in a lifetime.

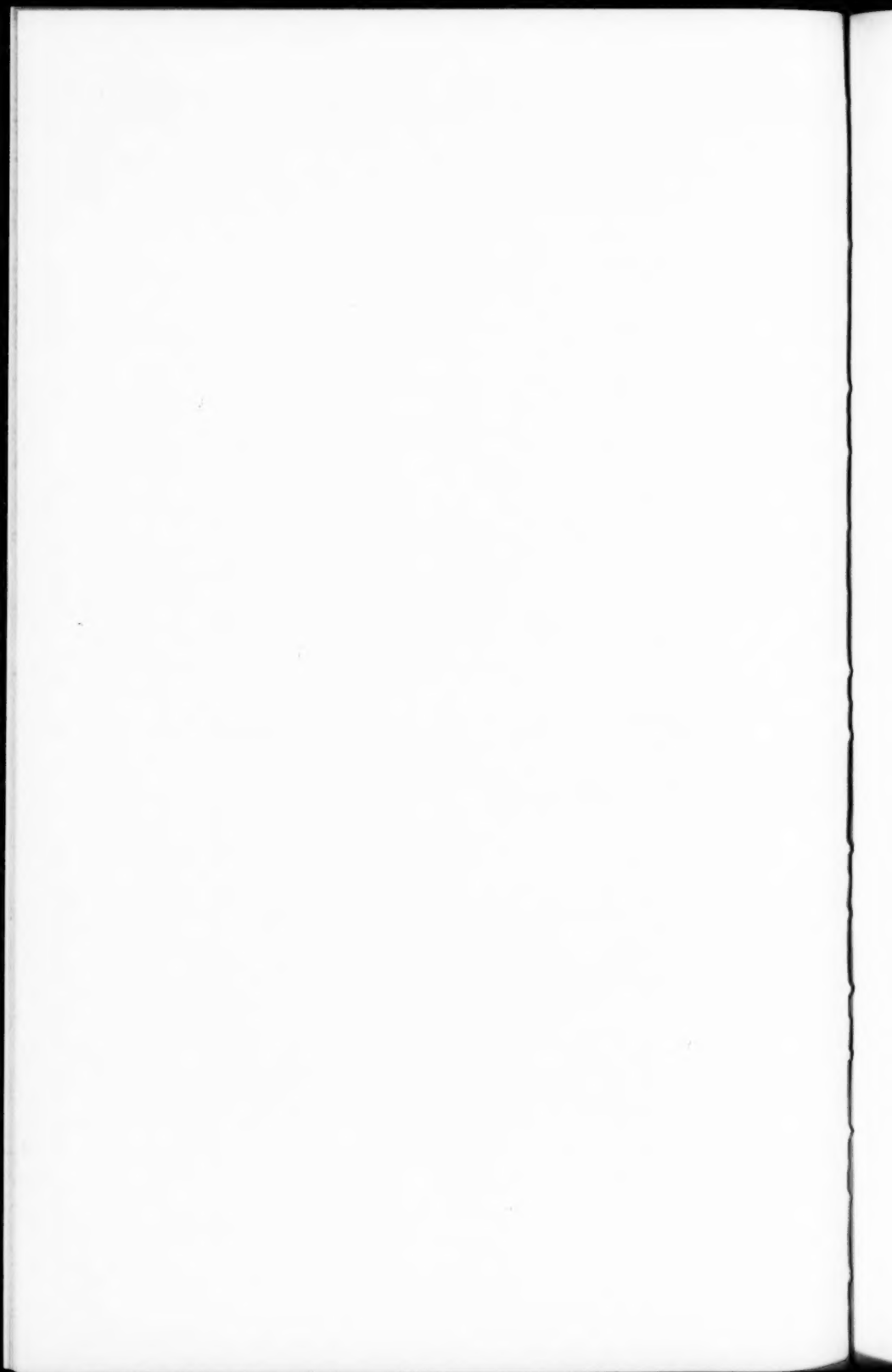
Maurel's *Don Juan* was a heroic figure: in his own words, "the unconscious apostle of a natural mission, the Procreator; a seducer, of course, and brutal by reason of his sensuality, but at the same time handsome, brave, elegant, witty, adroit."

Maurel's splendid virility and grace of person were as seductive as his eloquent voice and gesture. A quarter of a century of stage experience and intense study had provided him with the technical means to express every mood with vivid verisimilitude. But the culminating characteristic of his impersonation was a symbolic quality, the expression of a great natural force, man at his physical and mental best driven to destruction by ineluctable destiny. So conceived, and we may easily agree with Maurel that the music shows that Mozart so conceived it, the opera, though called *dramma giocoso*, is in its essence tragic.

Maurel sounded the tragic note distinctly in the first scene, when, having fatally wounded the Commendatore, he seemed, as he muttered under his breath the poignant phrases of the famous trio, already to sense the abyss toward which his fate is pushing him. Throughout the opera he draws nearer and nearer this abyss, his head high, reckless and radiant in the perfection of his will and physical vigor. In the last act he wore an elegant costume of unrelieved black, presumably to enhance the sombreness of the



Victor Maurel as Don Juan



final catastrophe. Seated at supper, he hears the fateful knocks of his awful guest. Seizing the lighted candelabrum from the trembling hands of Leporello, he strides, sword drawn, to the door. Called upon to repent of his many sins, he refuses once, twice, thrice, then sinks lifeless to the floor, his hand held fast in the icy grasp of the avenger. As Maurel played this scene, it was certainly high tragedy and left the spectator subdued and chastened in spirit, spellbound by the power of the masterpiece.

Any description of Maurel's performance would be incomplete if it did not include a reference to his complete mastery of the *recitativo secco*, to which he imparted a fluency, a vitality, a variety of color, an eloquence, that, in my experience, has never been equalled. As executed by him, there was nothing "dry" about it and it carried the story on to the next aria or ensemble swiftly and without any lapse of interest.

The song recital, or program of songs sung by one singer, is a form of entertainment of comparatively recent origin. Maurel's son qualifies his father as "*Quasi créateur du récital chanté moderne*" (in France). I was fortunate enough to hear two of his programs in Paris in 1897 and later heard him in London and New York, too. Nobody, man or woman, in my experience, has equalled him as a singer of songs. His mastery of vocal technique enabled him to paint his vocal pictures on the small canvass of the concert hall or drawing-room as skillfully as on the vast spaces of La Scala or the Metropolitan.

He used to precede the rendering of his program with a few well-expressed and authoritative remarks on the history and art of song-singing in general, and then, in the course of the program, interject here and there brief comments on the song he was about to sing. It was just enough to open and stimulate the minds of his hearers to the fullest enjoyment. As in his operatic performances, he neglected no detail that could contribute to the perfection of the whole. His afternoon costume, without in any particular obtruding itself on the eye, was chosen and worn with absolute good taste and a sense of the appropriate. His spoken words were always to the point, not too many and not too few. His songs were selected with a regard for their relation one to the other, as well as to the development of the program as a whole. His renderings were prepared with the utmost care. Never did he resort to any of the illusion-destroying aids to memory that are so obtrusive in our American concert halls.

He would usually begin his programs with a group of Italian songs of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which his years

of study in Italy enabled him to sing with incomparable perfection of style and color. I particularly recall his beautiful renderings of *Pur dicesti* (Lotti) and *Come Raggio di Sol* (Caldara). Passing through Mozart, Rossini and Donizetti, he would gradually approach the modern French school. On the way he would always include a group of songs by Schumann (sung in French), the only German song-writer who has won general acceptance in France. Maurel had a special liking for his songs and sang them with a warmth, a sincerity and a penetration of their meaning that were captivating. To an occasional criticism that his renderings were untraditional he would reply, "That may be, but I have been studying the art of singing and interpretation for many years; I have also made a pretty thorough study of the life and compositions of Schumann; his music makes a definite impression on me that I seek to express to the public. You are entirely at liberty to say my renderings are untraditional." Maurel had a sense of the dramatic that is rare in singers of songs and could dramatize a song with a poignancy that was thrilling. Schumann's little song *Im Walde*, as he sang it, became a scene of real intensity. So, too, was Camille Erlanger's *Fédia*, a vivid picture of a scene in Russian village life. Equally striking as examples of purely lyric style were his interpretations of the songs of contemporary French composers. I shall never forget his renderings, with the composer at the piano, of Reynaldo Hahn's *L'Heure exquise*, *Chanson d'Automne* and *Offrande*. They were exquisite in their miniature perfection.

All his life Maurel had been expressing thought and emotion orally in musical line and color; he had been the great depicter of character, a master of the art of portrait-painting through the medium of the lyric stage. Rigoletto, Amonasro, Iago, Falstaff, Don Juan—what a gallery of *chefs-d'œuvre*! Alas, that these portraits should exist in memory only! In his old age Maurel used to sit at his easel and transfer to the canvas before him the pictures that teemed in his restless brain. What the pictures were or how they were painted I do not know, but the scene is both pleasing and in character, and on it we may let fall the final curtain.

By way of epilogue let me quote again from Maurel's son:

Such was the vocal skill of Maurel, such was his art; as manifold as his aims. Italian art certainly by reason of its fire (*élan*), its rhythm, its accent and all its prodigious vocal resources; but French art, even more, by reason of its finesse, its balance, its taste, its intellectual control of the tone, its incessant search for psychological meanings, and the

exact expression of every mood. Above everything, art of the painter, art of the tonal colorist. In this field of accomplishment Maurel has had no rivals. In fact, no other singer has striven with the same ends in view. The vocal virtuosity of other days consisted of acrobatic feats of range and power; in the case of dramatic singers, of accent. Maurel was preëminently the virtuoso of tone-color (*timbre*).

A great singer and a great actor: as Verdi put it, "an actor-singer such as one rarely sees." In Maurel the art of lyric acting of the nineteenth century reached its fullest development.

THE MUSICAL MENTALITY OF HOLLAND

By HERBERT ANTCLIFFE

BETWEEN the instinctive feeling for art on the part of an individual or a nation and the conscious mentality which directs, or attempts to direct, such feeling, there is often a great gulf fixed. Not infrequently the one is opposed to the other to a degree that is wearisome to the person in whom the two exist and detrimental to the creative or constructive work of that individual. It is almost an axiom among certain classes that feeling is a characteristic of the lower natures, which, however, may by long tradition and training be developed into the superior characteristic known as fine-feeling; while mentality is considered by these classes to be characteristic of the higher nature possessed by the few. We thus get that division of society into the psychological classification which places "high-brows" at one pole and "those who live by their feelings" at the other.

Yet a careful examination of the facts will show that not only do Feeling and Mentality work in all classes and in all the actions of our lives, but in communal life they work so intimately in many respects as to be inseparable. The difference is more readily observable in the individual than in the nation, because in the nation there are so many diverse and complex activities that a correlation of these in a way that will give a unified impression demands long and intimate study and a realisation of the part each of such activities plays in relation to each and all of the others. With the individual we often find a love of the obvious and somewhat inferior types of art existing alongside a keen intellectual study of the best classical and modern works; or the reverse, the professional employment of the obvious, the commercial exploitation of the trivial, coupled with a love of the subtlest and most serious. The professor whistles the latest popular ditty or dance-tune and the enthusiastic and successful purveyor of drawing-room ballads prefers for his own pleasure the fugues and inventions of Bach or the later sonatas of Beethoven, Brahms, and their modern counterparts. Less easily observable, but none the less existent, is the contrast between the feeling and the mentality of a nation.

The blended and contrasted characteristics which have brought several tribes or families together for social and political purposes and made them a single nation exist in their art just as surely and as distinctively as in other matters. Holland, in its rapid growth in musical individuality during the last three or four decades, has provided a striking instance of this. During this period the country has developed a mentality in musical matters that will, probably, in the course of another similar period affect the whole nature of its activities and push it forward into a position among the most musical nations of the world. This does not imply that Holland has ever been anything but a musical country: on the contrary. Not only in the glorious days of Sweelinck and his contemporaries, but right down the centuries, as the people have sung at their work and play, as the children walking through the streets have sung the songs of home and country, as the great executants whose names are household words in the musical centres of four continents have interpreted the works of foreign composers in a magnificent and sympathetic manner, Holland has been a musical nation. That it has for long been united with, or even subservient to, its near neighbours with whom politically it has refused to be united either in friendship or in service, is the result of circumstances the most important of which is its racial relationship. Yet Holland, "the land of goloshes and overalls," "our little land of theology and alcohol," the nation of farmers, nurserymen and bourgeoisie, has always possessed a character and a mentality quite different from those of its big neighbours. I am not referring now to the work of its great painters, so many of whom were geniuses of the first water, for such work is often more individual than representative of the people. I refer to the character and mentality of the common people, of the shopkeepers and land-workers, whose art is always imitative, small, and incidental to the other circumstances of their lives.

To know these people apart from a personal residence among them one cannot do better than read that admirable study of the Dutch race and character written by Albert Vogel, himself a Dutchman, and published under the national inscription, "*Je main-tiendrai.*" The book was written before the war, but already the writer could speak of "little Netherland, the calm, peace-loving, industrious spot between the many great, clamorous states of Europe." In a few sentences he gives as comprehensive a picture of the average Dutchman as one can find. Here are some of them:

"Of Teutonic origin, our ancestors passed under a very great Keltic influence, made Greco-Roman culture their own and

exhibited an approach to the strongly mixed French, who themselves have both Teutonic and Keltic blood."

"Thoroughly commonplace, though wise in judgment, valuing personal liberty highly and not readily recognising authority, obstinate and sometimes small-minded in their aim, they preferred to remain outside all disturbing world-events."

"The Hollander has no *savoir-vivre*. He does not know how to enjoy himself. He has from generation to generation lived in isolation. He dresses badly, is shy of his appearance, and is afraid of a solecism if a stranger be present. Thus he becomes impolitely shy and remains silent. His criticism of all that is otherwise than what he is accustomed to is uncharitable. On the other hand he will abuse his own country equally unreasonably and pose lamentably unsuccessfully as a cosmopolitan."

"Our fellow-countryman is calmly industrious without any too great exertion, but also without any sudden lapses. He goes about things absolutely at his own convenience (*op zijn dooien gemak*), gives way (in both figurative and literal senses) with remarkable alacrity to small adversities and then goes and discusses quietly with his comrades how the obstacle may be removed."

"The Hollander is very far from being witty."

"Although we have brought forth the greatest painters in the world and although we possess very gifted artists in various spheres, in general our fellow-countryman is not 'artistic in feeling.' For this he is too jejune and commonplace. He would find something 'silly' in the admission that he is affected by beauty, and be afraid to cut a foolish figure. With this, Dutch art is little temperamental and tends very much to a scrupulous and deliberate detailing of what is at hand, but does not readily soar to far-reaching heights."

"Instead of being distinguished and amusing, the Hollander prefers to be *deftig* (to use a typical, untranslatable word), and present himself as one of the old 'regent' type."

This, then, is the Hollander as seen by one of his own countrymen who has been able to look at him from a detached and unbiassed point of view. The question for the student of Dutch music is, whether the Dutchman sees himself generally in the same light and whether, seeing himself so, he is content to remain so or endeavours to bring himself more into line with other peoples. Let it be said that not only is he content to be as so portrayed, but that he is fully conscious and proud of it, and that in nearly all his musical activities he makes no effort to be otherwise. The musical

feeling of Holland has for generations past been for the lightly lyrical, for the obviously sentimental, for the pronouncedly pious, moral and homely; often, like its humour, it is somewhat crude and coarse, but it is never deliberately or piquantly malicious, seldom broad in conception and still more seldom novel. The musical thought of Holland is *actual*, rather than either in the past or in the future. The temperament of the Hollander, in music as in other matters, shows itself to be easy-going, placid if somewhat heavy, cheerful and conservative. His mentality is not unrelated, though it provides some contrasts. He is, on the whole, a slow thinker even when his thoughts are light and cheerful.

To the average music-loving Hollander anything more recent in style than he remembers from his early days is at the best a thing of wonder, of curious surprise; at the worst it is a thing to be avoided. He will not think it worth while killing, except by neglect. He may even permit its style gradually to percolate through the hard bed of prejudice so that he progresses in a slow and comfortable way. To-day the composers whom he chooses deliberately and not from any merely instinctive liking are, besides the classics (that is, the German classics, for Byrd, Purcell, Rameau, Couperin, and even the Scarlattis, are almost unknown in Holland), Bruckner, Mahler and Richard Strauss; and of the last of these the works of a comparatively simple character. How strong "the German tradition" is in Holland may be seen by looking at a useful little book compiled by one of the best informed and most cultured of their conductors and teachers. This book, prepared for the use of examination students, gives lists of composers, executants, theorists and their works, classified according to nationality. Of course, the German list is the longest; this could not very well be otherwise. One need not object, either, to the inclusion of the Austrians who are of the same race as the Germans. It shows too strongly a regard for German musical honour, however, to include among their composers such names as César Franck the Belgian, Paul Juon the Russian, Rudolph Ganz and Hans Huber the Swiss, Emmanuel Moor the Englishman, while it was a perversion of national tribute which the present day is correcting that made possible the inclusion of names of Slav musicians such as Josef Haydn, Carl Czerny, Dohnányi, Joachim, Liszt, Josef Suk and Smetana. This is the aspect of much of the musical study of Holland; it is narrowly German, to such an extent that it is difficult for the average student to realise that any serious proportion of the good things of music came from outside the German nation and the German race. He does not

like the German personally, but he admires his music so greatly that he thinks all good music is either German or strongly influenced by Teutonic forces.

This is probably only a secondary result of his preference for music which makes no demands on his credulity, which is "safe" in its methods, which does not call for any great effort in the adjustment of his critical or analytical standards. Just as in business matters he will take few risks with his money, preferring a small return with security to a larger return for a larger risk, so in his music he will listen to and perform the same works year after year, certain that he will get a return of pleasure and edification, avoiding those things about which he is doubtful and about which his critical standards have not been fixed by long tradition or experience. Not that he is in any sense uncritical or that his criticism fails of a high standard. On the contrary, he is a very keen, well-informed critic, expressing quite freely his opinion of what he hears. That he does so more readily with regard to performances than to works means simply that he is an amateur, a listener, not a producer or a first- (or second-) hand creator, and that he is conscious of the fact that his constructional knowledge is inferior to his mechanical and interpretative ability.

Even in the matter of works, however, he has his standards of criticism, such standards being arrived at by an almost exact balance between mind and emotion. Because he knows that the works of Beethoven and Brahms are good, well constructed, inspired, expressing fine thoughts in a fine way, he feels that works which do not conform to these standards lack some of their greatness, while if they have any significance of a different character he is so far out of sympathy with such character that he cannot see the significance of the individual work. It was more than any mere feeling for obvious beauty or direct expression of emotion that caused a Dutch audience only a short time ago to receive one work of a native composer with the silence of indifference and another work by the same composer with enthusiastic applause. There was more in it, also, than a difference of performance or in the personalities of the performers, for the unpopular work was played with vivacity and personal charm, while the popular one had scant justice done to its beauties and the best that could be said of the performance was that it presented the written score with accuracy. Evidently, then, it was the inherent character of the music that created the effect on the slow responsiveness of the Dutch audience. The difference in the reception lay in the difference existent in the works themselves. This difference was that

the former was a copy—possibly an unintentional and unconscious copying—of the music of prominent French composers and did not conform to the formal standards which Dutch audiences demand, while the later work conformed to those standards and had a certain amount of character which can only be described as national feeling: to those who know the Dutch people intimately it was recognizable as the work of a Dutchman.

This national character the Dutchman is, in spite of himself, beginning to realise in his music. It comes very slowly, and like his other musical characteristics its force comes first from outside. He is realising that it is possible to express his nationality in music only because he sees that other nations are doing so and because it is being pointed out to him frequently and forcibly that the best of the modern Dutch composers are doing so unconsciously to an increasing degree. Alphons Diepenbrock, the first of the Dutch composers to throw himself into the stream of modern thought and feeling, is representative of his nation particularly in the variety and versatility of his work. He had the faculty, which the gifted Dutchman possesses more fully than most other Western Europeans, of momentarily bringing himself into the closest sympathy of the thoughts and feelings of other peoples and of appreciating the subtleties of their languages. The Dutchman who is not in some small degree a linguist is the exception; when he rises higher than this and becomes a traveller, a *littérateur*, or an artist of international reputation, he rapidly acquires not only the working knowledge of other languages which is essential and which people of less linguistic ability achieve, but he gets inside the most intimate subtleties of the language and even of the thoughts of the people to whom that language is the mother-tongue, and, for the time being—in some cases permanently—becomes one of them. Being essentially Teutonic, he naturally is more at home with German music than with that of Italy, France or Spain, and he not only writes German music to German words, but he usually finds the greatest objects of his admiration in the prominent figures among German musicians. A case in point, or rather two cases in point, are those of Mahler and Bruckner, whose music has greater support in Holland than in any other country, even including their own. What appeals to the Dutchman in their work is its Teutonic character, its obviousness, its massiveness, its scholarship. Yet when he finds something to admire and appreciate in the literature of another nation he will employ that for his musical purposes with excellent effect and in such a way as to suggest that he is in a degree, and sometimes in a high degree, related to such nation.

In this matter he is, however, exceedingly prejudiced. As a literary language he considers that English is almost supreme, but the old tradition that it is an unmusical language persists in such a way as to prevent any except a few enthusiasts from realising that some of the finest music of all time has been written to English words; apart, of course, from the question whether English music is in itself worthy of consideration. You will get in Holland, therefore, a large body of (say) school-teachers, who speak English with fluency and an almost perfect accent, singing Handel's "Messiah" or Elgar's "The Apostles" in German, believing the tradition rather than making any experiment themselves into the possibilities of the words which Handel and Elgar considered quite suitable for musical treatment. To a less extent they have a prejudice against their own language in this matter, partly, no doubt, owing to the lack in the last two centuries of Dutch composers of any eminence and also partly to the fact that there is little scope for music in a language spoken by so small a proportion of the population of Europe. The Dutch composer who would make a commercial proposition of his work, in any sense of the term, must win a reputation beyond the confines of his own country, and to do this his vocal music must be in a language that is understood and spoken on a much larger scale than his own.

One of the drawbacks of this is that music comes to be regarded, more than in most other countries, as a middle-class occupation, a subject that requires the schooling and education which are just beyond the reach of the ordinary workman. The workman must have his music, of course, but it is not the art-music, the music which the rich man patronises and the ex-secondary school pupil practises. There are, of course, some societies in which all classes may meet to sing together, but as a rule organised music for the workingmen and women is on a lower standard than that organised for the teachers, clerks and shopkeepers. I am not ignoring the splendid "Volks Concerten" given by the Concertgebouw Orchestra of Amsterdam, the Residentie Orchestra of the Hague, and others, at which the highest class of programme is presented. My point is the provision of music in which the worker takes a practical share. There is a strong movement for what is called folk-song, a term used perhaps in a more complete and less limited sense than in other countries. The corpus of traditional song in Holland is not large, and this folk-song movement is based only slightly upon it. A new tradition was founded two or three generations ago based on the then recent growth of national feeling aroused by the Independence of 1813. It was

deliberately fostered by certain poets and musicians who saw that for it to be strengthened in its popular character it must not go back to the archaic style of the melodies of past ages, but must take on the character of the people for whom it was composed. It is easy in this music to trace the influence of Mendelssohn, of Spohr, of the older ballad composers of the nineteenth century. Richard Hol was the composer of many of these songs which are now in the strictest sense of the term Folk-songs, songs which one hears in the streets, in the highways and byways of town and country alike, in the houses and the schools. To-day not only are these songs still being sung, but the tradition of their composition is being continued in the simplest and best works of Catherina van Rennes and Arnold Spoel, and is incorporated in a few orchestral works by F. E. A. Koeberg, Anton Averkamp, Dina Appeldoorn, and other able and popular local composers. These songs in their most modern form are a slightly superior type of royalty ballad, with homely subjects and generally ballads in the more strictly technical sense in the fact that they are written in stanza-form. One hears them constantly, not as passing fashions like the ordinary ballad, which, it must be said, has a certain vogue here just as in America or England, but as a continuing body of national song. Without any disparagement of the splendid work of such a collector and editor as Julius Röntgen, without which the ancient traditional songs would have been lost, it may be said that these people have done what is perhaps a greater work in restoring the idea of folk-song, of providing music which suggests to the worker that he should sing at his work and at his play, or maintaining the homely sentiment without which home becomes a lodging. And the songs they have provided are such as the people can and do sing, not, as is so often the case among folk-song enthusiasts, songs which it is considered they ought to sing and which they will sing only under direction. They are not modal, but generally diatonic and most often in a major key. The idea of making folk-song a vital thing is one of the best features of the musical mentality of the Hollanders.

The idea of a national tradition in art-music is not so new in Holland as its somewhat slow development would suggest. Hol, J. J. Viotta, Verhulst and other nineteenth-century musicians, strongly influenced as they were by the German classical movement, were already feeling their way slowly to a national development when G. A. Heinze, a German settled in Amsterdam, proposed fifty years ago the formation of a society to encourage the use of the Dutch language by Dutch composers and to urge the

fuller expression of individuality. Not only was Hol the most completely equipped composer of his day, but he was a real leader, and to his leadership the formation of the *Nederlandsche Toonkunstenaars Vereeniging*, with all that its influence has meant to the development of a National School (as it appears in the work of the younger composers, such as Willem Pijper, Sem Dresden, Sigtenhorst Meyer, and their contemporaries and followers) was largely due. With the majority of the people of the country still thinking that music in its higher forms must be a copy of that of other countries, it would be impossible to include as a feature of the musical mentality of Holland the idea of a national school were it not that such idea is gaining ground with increasing rapidity. Those who, a decade or less ago, would have denied with laughter any suggestion that there existed or could exist any actual and definite Dutch feeling in music, are now recognising it in the work of a number of the younger composers, and with this recognition the thing itself is growing. Some are afraid of the way in which these composers are developing their technique by copying the methods of the French schools or of those of Vienna, but they are bound to acknowledge that where by such methods the most complete technical equipment has been acquired is to be found the most characteristic national expression. In this matter we see in Holland an example of the intimate connection, which I pointed out in my opening paragraphs, between mentality and feeling. Without the feeling aroused by the events of the first quarter of last century there would have been no possibility of a distinctively Dutch musical expression; such expression, however, could not arise merely from the crude feeling, but must be shaped and to a certain extent propelled by a deliberate mental activity. How slow the progress is in the realisation that art-music is not confined to Germany, Italy and Russia may be gauged by the following incident.

On one occasion, wishing to get some idea of what was being done with regard to the music of my own country in Holland, I called on a number of music-sellers and asked to be shown some British songs and piano pieces. One answered quite candidly, "No, I do not deal in it. I deal only in music of a serious character; you had better go to . . ." (and he mentioned the name of a dealer notorious for his transactions in the worst types of British and American trash). Two others, both of them being, besides dealers, excellent musicians, produced various pieces of a type that was not seriously bad, but of such a character that it would be forgotten in the course of a few weeks. "I do not want this kind of thing," I said: "I want art-music." "Oh," said one, "you mean Cyril Scott.

I shall be having some of his music next week." The other one gave a similar answer, regretting that he had no music by Elgar. They had no idea that there were any other British composers attempting serious work. Then I asked for some Dutch music, telling each of them that I wished to make a collection of the best music that was being written by Dutchman and particularly any that could be said to be characteristic of the country. Immediately out came bundles of "Cabaret-liedjes," broadly humorous and vulgar country songs, and easy popular songs by van Rennes, Spoel and Emiel Hullebroek, the last of whom is a Belgian. Again the real Dutch musicians were ignored or assumed to have written no music that could be called characteristic, and the names Diepenbrock, Wagenaar, Dresden, Ruyneman, Schäfer, Sigtenhorst Meyer, Koeberg (the two most typically national), Pijper, Voormolen, passed them by as a wind that meant nothing. Art-music from England or Holland! In justice to the commercial acumen of these people, not only to the few individuals with whom I made these experiments but to the music-dealers as a class, it must be recorded that a great change has occurred in the year since this happened, and the names of Dutch composers are figuring more frequently and with considerable prominence in their lists and even in their étalages. To one of the more intelligent of them I had also the pleasure of pointing out that, while the purveyor must be a servant of the public and supply what is demanded, he may also influence that demand by offering what he knows to be good and what may increase a knowledge of what is being done by those best able to do it. The mentality of the Dutchman is affected, though not created, by what he sees in the shop-windows. It is a fact with which the publisher of inferior music is very familiar, and it says much for the intelligence of the Dutch music-dealers that they are realising it with regard to the better classes of these wares.

Coupled with this growth of interest in the music of their own countrymen and of that of composers of the last thirty years has come among the Dutch music-loving public a growth of interest in the music of the Golden Age of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, so that Palestrina and Sweelinck, Vittoria and Josquin de Prés, and all the great Italian and Netherlands composers of that time, are coming into their own. The Dutchman loves to hear choral music and to take part in it, and while there are a number of large choirs, of bodies numbering two or three hundred voices from the highest soprano to the deepest bass, there are hundreds of smaller choirs, some of mixed voices, but still more of male voices only. There

is in these choirs, as may most obviously be seen in their adoption of such names as "Polyhymnia," "Crescendo," "Euterpe," "Inter Nos," a sort of mild classicalism or even of Latinism. This shows itself in a stronger and a better light in the rapidly growing number of choirs which sing the music of Palestrina, de Lassus, Josquin de Prés, and the unaccompanied works of Bach and the moderns influenced by the early classics. One of the most popular groups of performers is an admirable "Madrigal Society" consisting of nine well-known singers directed by Sem Dresden, one of the outstanding composers as well as one of the best organisers in Holland to-day. As its title implies, this little choir studies the older music without neglecting modern works. It travels round the country and meets everywhere with acclamation alike for its choice of music as for its performances. Another popular form of musical entertainment is the organ recital, to which, however, is frequently added choral or solo vocal work. A Bach-Palestrina programme, with the organ works of the former alternating with the motets and selections from the Masses of the latter composer, is not untypical, and Bach Choirs, Palestrina Choirs, and choirs devoted to a cappella music ancient and modern, abound.

The amateur in Holland regards his music purely from the practical point of view. Unless he be a specialist he is rarely a theorist; often he is an excellent performer who nevertheless can scarcely read a single stave of music-print. He reads little or nothing about his subject, so that criticism, even in the most popular papers, is written chiefly for the benefit of the professional, the only attempts to reach the man-in-the-street being by reference to the acclamation with which an artist is received, the flowers presented (to both men and women artists), or the quality of the instrument used or of the method of the artist's teacher. Practically all Dutchmen know of the existence and international fame of the magnificent museum of Dr. D. F. Scheurleer and of the well-filled musical libraries available for all who wish to make use of them. The museum, however, they consider quite outside their scope, and the libraries they use for the purpose of finding out the character of pieces before deciding whether to add them to their own collections. Such a method as Tonic Sol-fa, so popular and useful in the neighbouring country of England, is practically unknown in Holland, for it is the business of the "musician" to teach the "amateur," not of the amateur to make himself independent of the teacher. Periodicals devoted to music are rare, and such as exist are written with an eye on the profession or are devoted to some special technical subject: Pedagogy, Plain Chant,

History, the Organ, etc. Their circulation is small and highly specialised, so that for the outsider it is difficult to get hold of a copy in order to decide whether to become a subscriber. That anyone should wish for an odd copy of a musical journal does not come within their ideas at all. The other, general, periodicals devote a certain amount of space to music, the monthlies having from time to time lengthy and learned reviews of Dutch, German, English and French books, and both these and the weekly newspapers giving very readable and interesting accounts of the personalities most prominent in the musical world.

Summing up, one may say that in musical matters Holland is true to its general character in every detail. It is a land of small exclusive circles, each conscious of its own identity and its own importance, not necessarily despising the others, but having nothing, or as little as possible, to do with them. The Dutchman himself is fully aware of this, and individually he will talk about it in a way to suggest that he himself is of quite a different nature. Suggest to him, however, that he should apply to himself and his neighbours the less exclusive methods of England and America, he will at once politely decline on the ground that such methods are not suited to his own country. He will agree that the people lose as much as they gain by their conservative ideas as to what music is good and by their exclusive artistic and social caste system, but he will make no move to prevent that loss. His knowledge of certain of the classics is thorough and practical and he believes that every note written by Bach and Beethoven was inspired, though he is not quite so sure of Haydn and Mozart or of his modern idols, Mahler, Bruckner and Brahms. As to his own countrymen, he believes the foreigner who tells him that Alphons Diepenbrock was a great composer and that Willem Pijper seems likely to become one; but he prefers to stick to the easier and more comprehensible music of Arnold Spoel, Catherina van Rennes and Hubert Cuypers. In a word, the Hollander is musically a provincial, a person with a local outlook, possessing to the full all the qualities and defects which such a description implies.

THE HEALTH OF MUSICIANS

By JAMES FREDERICK ROGERS

MUSIC has been commended and recommended as a cure for sundry bodily and mental ills. It has been applied medicinally on an extensive scale in institutions for the mentally maimed and clinics have been established where persons at large may be treated with "martial tones or grave" according to their special needs.

But what of the musician himself? Is he remarkably healthy because exposed so continuously to this powerful agency, or does he sometimes suffer, as does the manipulator of the X-rays, from an overdosage of the remedy he applies for the good of others? Is he subject also to occupational diseases derived, not from the product of his professional efforts, but incidental to its production?

If we turn to dry statistics we are told that musicians are especially subject to tuberculosis; but statistics must always be looked upon with suspicion, and on examination one finds that the persons listed to furnish these estimates are a very miscellaneous lot, for the hurdy-gurdy and grindorgan men, and other performers whose lot is not an easy one, help to swell the total.

In works on medicine it was, until very recently, stated that performers on wind-instruments were especially subject to emphysema, or a stretching of the delicate air-sacs of the lungs; and there is a tradition among musicians that oboe-playing has a tendency to induce insanity. Mr. F. N. Innes remarked in a letter to the author that "there is doubtless a great deal of nonsense about this belief, but the belief is certainly prevalent, and I should personally say that my own experience has tended to confirm the belief that, in the cases of a small minority of players on this instrument, the effects are as stated." The strength of this notion, even among performers on the instrument, is evinced by the fact that an oboe-player in London, when tried for theft, pleaded not guilty on the ground that his act was the result of a mental condition brought about by his professional work. Just what the judge in the case thought of this plea we were not told by our informant.

The effect or imagined effect of playing upon this beautiful instrument (when it is beautiful) has been attributed to the prolonged pressure of air within the lungs needed for tone-production

and the secondary effect on the circulation in the brain. It is an unlikely hypothesis, and certainly not as tenable an explanation as that the plaintive character of the music produced by the instrument may have by degrees a disastrous effect upon the mind. Every really artistic reed-instrument player is likely to be driven "to drink" if not to insanity by the behavior or misbehavior of his reeds. Whether the oboist has more trouble along these lines than other wood-wind performers, we do not know. If there is any real foundation for such a legend of the oboist (of the truth of which we are very skeptical), perhaps it is some combination of all these conditions that leads to his mental unbalancing. That the playing of the oboe does not shorten existence, or necessarily cloud the mentality in later life, is evidenced by the fact that a performer on this instrument who was ninety-two years of age appeared not long since as a soloist at a public performance in Boston.

As for the medical legend that wind-instrumentalists, of all persuasions, are likely to develop emphysema, that has been definitely and finally exploded. Paraphrasing Uncle Remus, they seem like they ought to have it; but they do not have it any more frequently than any one else.

The walls of the air-sacs of the lungs are exceedingly delicate, so delicate in fact that a hundred such walls laid upon one another would hardly be as thick as a sheet of this paper; yet they are so evenly supported by the elastic tissues of the lungs that they withstand a very high pressure indeed. If wind-instrument players did injure their lungs in the blowing, then vocalists would also do so, for the pressure developed below the vocal cords, when high tones are sung, is quite equal to that used in playing upon the cornet and trumpet, which require most exertion of all the wind choir. Emphysema is a disease which follows chronic bronchitis. If a performer on a wind-instrument or a singer were to suffer from this disease year after year he would in all likelihood develop emphysema, but so also would the bass drummer or the violinist.

As for tuberculosis, it has long been believed that singing and playing on wind-instruments was a protection, at least to some degree, against this dread disease, and many persons have taken to one or other of these exercises in the hope of prevention or of cure. There have, however, been plenty of tuberculous musicians of this class. Among amateurs it will be recalled that Robert Louis Stevenson amused himself with a flageolet, and Sidney Lanier is an example of one who for a time at least made a name for himself in the profession.

Flute-playing has been recommended for tuberculosis and for those predisposed to the disease. Quantz, the flute-player to Frederick the Great, advised it; and Lanier believed that playing on the instrument was of great benefit to himself, and strongly recommended it for others. Lanier took up the flute long before he showed evidence of tuberculosis, and he did not consider himself a consumptive until after the Civil War, during which he was a prisoner under most trying physical conditions. The disease showed itself at 25 and he lived to be 39. He continued to play until his last year.

Tuberculosis is a disease which finds a fertile soil in fatigue, dusty atmospheres and dissipation, and many a musician has succumbed to it from these contributing causes and not through the playing upon any particular instrument.

It is an interesting problem why musicians take to one or another instrument;—one to the piano, another to the 'cello, another to the bassoon and another to the tuba. Mental beckonings are concerned, but physical backgrounds are also a factor. One may be able to play a flute with ease and pleasure where he would find the trombone wearisome. A martial mentality will take to the trumpet, while the less robust and peace-loving person will prefer the violin.

To determine statistically the effects on longevity of playing upon wind-instruments the author made a compilation from Grove's "Dictionary of Music," and Champlin's "Cyclopedia of Music and Musicians," of the ages of one hundred performers upon such instruments, and also of a like number of players upon stringed instruments, violin, violoncello and piano. The period covered was from about 1700 to 1900 and the members of the two groups were fairly evenly distributed as regards the period in which they lived.

The general average length of life obtained from these figures was, for wind-instrument players, 63.5 years; for players upon stringed instruments, 62 years. Of the former, 34 per cent. reached more than three-score-and-ten years. For each group of wind-instruments the figures were:

	Average Longevity
Flute.....	61.2 years
Oboe.....	63 "
Bassoon.....	63 "
Horn.....	64.4 "
Clarinet.....	65.2 "
Trumpet and cornet.....	69.1 "

So far as the general hygienic conditions of their professional work is concerned, the performers on stringed instruments (especially pianists) would be expected to have the better of it, though this has certainly produced no effect in added longevity.

It is especially interesting that, among the players upon wind-instruments, those who must exert the greatest lung-pressure, namely, the performers upon the trumpet and cornet, are longest lived. Included in this group is one man who died at the age of 28, and, had he lived to the age of the next youngest, the average for the trumpeters would have been 72 years. On the contrary, the group of players who develop the least pressure within their lungs, the flutists, average only 61.2 years, although here 30 per cent. reach the age of 70. The average longevity for performers upon the other instruments increases in proportion to the pressure needed to produce an adequate tone upon such instruments. This increase in longevity is not to be attributed, however, to the increase of pressure required in performance, but rather to the fact that the more vigorous would be apt to take up the study of an instrument more difficult in this respect, and that only such could make a sufficient mark as virtuosi upon instruments like the trumpet or clarinet, to secure for themselves a paragraph in the pages of a cyclopedia. A consumptive like Sidney Lanier may be a very brilliant flutist, but no consumptive would have the physical power to make a fine clarinetist or trumpeter.

The average length of life a century ago was only 39 years and the average to-day is only about 56, so that all of these musicians, whether they blew, scraped, or pounded on the keys, lived to a comparatively good old age.

But there are other ailments than those mentioned, and after all, health is not measured by death rates, for health means being at our best. The average person in other professions or occupations loses some four or five days a year from his work on account of illness. We have no statistics for a large or general group of musicians, but eleven members of the wind section of the Boston Symphony Orchestra were absent, on an average, but two times each in a total of ten seasons, or about 2500 rehearsal and concert days. This would give an absence of less than four-tenths of a day per man, an astonishingly low rate. Apparently these musicians are ten times as healthy as the average of men. The lowest rate of absenteeism on account of sickness of which we have knowledge was that of male teachers in the school system of one of our New England cities, and even the pedagogues were absent four times as often as the Boston musicians. If this little group

is representative then orchestral performers of this class are a very healthy set indeed.

We have no statistics for singers, but singing has always been recommended as a most healthful exercise. Moreover, the professional singer is soon aware that, if he is to maintain his reputation for long, he must look to his health, nor is he any ordinary athlete who can train for the season and then fall from grace between times. He is subject to a professional disease in laryngitis, for he is incapacitated for work by a slight inflammation of the vocal cords and is made worse by their use, whereas a person in most other callings would be able to go about his business. Aside from this weakness, vocalists would probably rank with performers on wind-instruments both as to longevity and health.

Pianists sometimes suffer, as do writers, from over-use of certain muscles, but the condition is not common and probably has little to do, either in origin or effect, with the general health. Save for being a somewhat sedentary and indoor worker, the professional pianist is probably as healthy and long-lived as the average person under similar conditions with like ambitions to be somebody and with like knowledge of hygiene, and the same can be said of performers on other stringed instruments.

If we pass from the realm of executant musicians to the region of the gods we are aware at once that not all composers have been healthy or long-lived. Chopin comes to mind, and Weber also died early of tuberculosis. There was nervous and mental disease among them of which Donizetti, Schumann and Tschaikowsky afford examples. We are all familiar with Chopin's delicacy, which would be altogether unsuspected in listening to many of his works. (A recent writer remarks that Chopin was "strong in body and mind far beyond the common order" until he developed his fatal illness.) Weber was already pale, languishing and slender at seventeen. At twenty he drank by mistake some nitric acid, used by his father for etching, and recovered only after a long illness. He was always small, weakly and unimpressive, yet he possessed much vigor, and astonished his friends by the energy, force and persistence he displayed in playing bowls and in walking expeditions in the Alps. It was during the rapid progress of his fatal malady (which became active in his thirty-second year) that the *Concerstück*, *Der Freischütz* and *Euryanthe*, and finally *Oberon*, were born. Music had little power over the disease, but the more remarkable thing is that the disease seems to have had no effect on the music.

There is a common belief, often expressed, that great men, whether musicians or others, are abnormal in both body and mind, and such examples as the above are put forward to bolster such a theory. Nothing is farther from the fact, however, for the great man as a rule is of superior physique and vigor, and the greater the man of genius the more regard he has for the physical foundations on which his work depends. For every Keats there is a Goethe, Tennyson or Browning; for every Stevenson there is a Hugo, Dickens or Scott. For every Paganini there is a small army of robust violinists led by such an heroic figure as Spohr; for every Chopin there are Liszts and Rubinsteins; and over against Weber and the other few composers who were delicate or sickly we have such giants as Handel, Bach, Beethoven and Brahms. The picture of Wagner at the age of sixty standing on his head on a sofa just for the sheer fun of showing a friend that he could do so, does not indicate that he was particularly weak. He is said to have excelled all the other young men of the Dresden School as a tumbler, and his acrobatic powers persisted. In later life his energy was irrepressible and fortunately much of it went into his music. At the age of sixty-nine he directed the elaborate preparations for, and the sixteen performances of, *Parsifal* at Bayreuth. He was troubled with dyspepsia, but it was like the sting of a gnat to a lion. It was said to have been due to eye-strain (a glance at his portrait will show that he was at least "wall-eyed"), and he was always "dieting" in hope of a cure. A biographer states that what Wagner underwent along this line is past belief. Once, when told of Mendelssohn's fondness for sweets, he exclaimed, "I eat no sweet stuff, only meat, as anyone may hear, I believe, in my music."

Beethoven was the very embodiment of bodily vigor, although he too had his ailments, not the least of which was the cause of his deafness. One person described him as "power personified"; another likened him to Jupiter. Benedict said he had the figure of a Cyclops. Like most great men, he was abstemious. "Wherefore so many dishes?" he once exclaimed. "Man stands but little above other animals if his chief enjoyments are limited to the table." Indeed, his irregular meals of badly prepared food would have damaged a less perfect organism. He remained robust to the last and it is needless to say that his music reflected his fund of vitality.

In Brahms, however, we have a being who wholly refutes the theory that genius is allied to disease, for he was never sick. At twenty it was remarked that "his constitution was thoroughly

sound; the most strenuous exertion scarcely fatigued him, and he could go soundly to sleep at any hour of the day he pleased." Hegar described him at thirty-two as in "extraordinarily sound health. He could venture upon anything." Henschel went swimming with him and admired his burly, well-knit, muscular body, "the very image of strength and vigor." He resembled Beethoven in his passionate fondness for the out-of-doors and in his pedestrian excursions into the country. At sixty he took long tramps in the Alps and he walked "with head thrown back, the very personification of vigor." He was prepared at all times to do ample justice to good cookery, and good wine and beer which his friends set before him, "but he was, at no period of his life, a glutton or a wine-bibber, and indeed he never varied from the abstemious habits which the early circumstances of his life had made incumbent upon him as a young man." Brahms' music may be "muddy" (or was the critic who invented this phrase muddy?), but it is never sickly or weak. He knocks into the proverbial cocked hat the idea that genius inhabits an unsound brain and crazy body. On the contrary, he confirms Emerson's dictum that "genius consists in health, in plenipotence of that top of condition which allows not only of exercise but of frolic of fancy."

Back in the early days of the sixteenth century, one Giambattista Della Porta, a distinguished Italian physicist, and inventor of the camera obscura, suggested that instruments made from wood of medicinal plants would produce music having the effects of the plant. It was a curious fancy and was certainly not easy to disprove, for neither the poppy, belladonna, nor any other drug-yielding plant of our acquaintance, furnishes materials that could be made into any musical instrument of consequence. There is, however, one material for musical instruments—and a practical one—which by its very presence produces a very considerable influence over the minds of certain people. How boxwood, as a material for the making of clarinets, ever came to have the reputation it possesses as a source of ill luck to those in its presence, we do not know; but the "yellow" instrument of this class is taboo in many a theater and other institution. Though a superior wood for the purpose, it has gone out of use for the making of musical instruments, although in the form of other useful objects it seems to produce no baneful effects. A very distinguished artist on the clarinet who is still living had his instruments made of this material, but colored them with a dark stain. As, in this disguise, they gave no offense to the organizations with

which he was connected, it was evidently the color of the instrument and not the wood or the music produced from it which causes the mischief. Doubtless if some enterprising person should set up a clinic in which patients were treated with instruments which the patients knew to have been steeped in extracts of drugs, he could produce most marvellous results, for the cure of mental disorders and the mental healing of some bodily misbehaviors have been brought about by less formidable means.

Leaving aside the effects of the peculiar physical exertion needed for the performance upon various instruments, and the sanitary conditions of the environment in which he must perform professionally, there remains the possible effect upon the musician of that which is known to have a potent influence, for the time being at least, upon his auditors—the music he produces. It is only upon or through the mind that music has its influence and, though the lasting effects of this influence are often exaggerated by those who have written on the subject, it is very profound. Moreover, an influence upon present mental states may mean an effect for good or ill upon future conduct. In *THE MUSICAL QUARTERLY* for July, 1918, we have given an instance in our own experience, where the attendance upon a private recital of music removed the resolve of suicide.

Musicians are an emotional lot (they could not be musicians if they were otherwise), and it may be that the constant bathing in "music's golden sea" adds to their peculiar temperament. Doubtless exposure to public gaze or adulation does much to make many of them "different," but we doubt whether they are any more "queer" than any other persons would be in this position. Where the emotional floods are deep and well controlled many of them might, however, be taken for farmers or merchants.

If emotional, and possessing the unevenness of mental qualities characteristic of genius, the number of great musicians who have found their way to the mad-house can be counted on the fingers of one hand, and they do not represent a larger proportion than is to be found in other professions, if as large a one. Doubtless (as is usually the case) half of these insane musicians came to grief through bacterial disease of the brain, and it is evident enough that their trade had no influence in the matter. The sufferings evoked by the mistakes of his pupils, or the exasperating effects of jazz from a discordant piano in the flat across the way, are literally enough to drive a sensitive musician insane, and the fact that he so seldom goes insane is proof of the strength of his nervous

system or the restorative power of the music to which he is attuned when played by himself or others.

To sum up, the conjurer of sweet sounds who wields such a powerful influence upon others seems to be none the worse for his more frequent exposure to his potent drug. Nor are the traditions that performers on certain instruments are subject to certain diseases well-founded. On the contrary, they seem, on the whole, a rather superior lot both as to health and longevity.

Health depends on inherited immunity, avoidance of the cause of disease, a knowledge of hygiene, and last, but not least, the ambition to be somebody and to excel in one's chosen work. As regards the last item, the musician can hardly be said to be inferior to persons in any other calling. Michelangelo's father admonished him to be "of all things careful of his health, for in your profession, if once you fall ill you are a ruined man," and later the illustrious son returned the counsel by reminding his father that he should "look to his health, for a man does not return to patch up things ill done." The product of the musician, especially the executant musician, is of such a nature that there is no doing it over again at the same performance, and his reputation rises or falls according to his condition for the moment.

Lord Bacon, in his essay "The Regiment of Health," than which there has never been a better, counsels us to "avoid anxious fear; anger fretting inward; subtle and knotty inquisitions; sadness not communicated." The musician has an unusual opportunity to let loose his emotions at all times, and, in so doing, should be the more healthy and youthful.

MUSIC AND THE MEDITERRANEAN

By HANSELL BAUGH

A PROMINENT place among the perennially interesting curiosities of musical criticism is occupied by such examples as survive of the extraordinary judgments that have been passed in historic centuries upon musicians by men whose classification to-day is that of philosopher, or candlestick-maker. Assertions from the latter professional class are rare enough: musical parallels of the banishment of Aristides the Just are, like their prototype, mainly anecdotal. For the documentary evidence it is necessary to seek out the philosophers, the novelists, the poets—the musical dilettanti. The nineteenth century is perhaps richest of all past centuries in this kind of “literature”—since the progressive spread of interest in the song and the symphony and, more than either alone, in the combination of both in opera, has reached in the present century a pitch that makes it seem to have left no professional, social, or other class of humanity untouched in some degree. But the examples here extend back and back: to say how far would be as difficult as to set the birth-date of musical criticism itself.

Fifty years ago—not to venture the names of any philosophers or even candlestick-makers of the present year of grace—Friedrich Nietzsche uttered his battle cry, “*Il faut méditerraniser la musique!*” and proceeded to combat Wagner with Bizet and Peter Gast, by way of showing what he meant. Some fifty years earlier, Henri Beyle transferred his musical allegiance from Haydn and Mozart—Beethoven being out of the question for him from the start—to the living and flourishing Rossini. And another half-century still farther removed, in the hectic days of the Encyclopædia, Jean-Jacques Rousseau had defended the opera of Italy against the eminent Rameau, against Baron Grimm—the author of the *Lettre sur Omphale*—against such of the precursors of Bach as he knew about, and against his native land France itself.

How many cases of equal interest exist in between or earlier than these, perhaps only Mr. Ernest Newman knows. In these three alone, the chief interest lies in their possession of two common aspects that have a considerable bearing on what the Mediterranean Sea may stand for in music: the one is that each of the

judges was less musician than "thinker"; the other, simply that the ideal music of all three required "mediterraneanization."

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Rousseau's musical activities are chronicled more or less in full in the Confessions, although not in the most celebrated passages of that work. It is of course known that he came by his earliest worldly fame as a musician, first as the inventor of a numerical system of notation whose shortcomings Rameau took the trouble to explain to him and to the world, and secondarily as the composer of a succession of comedy-operas; it is known that these works seemed to a reasonable number of his contemporaries very gay, very pleasing, because very "tuneful" as tunes went in Paris in those days. In the Paris of a year or two ago, a small portion of posterity was given the opportunity to listen to one of his most resounding successes: it seems from Monsieur André Cœuroy's account that the only thing to be learned from the performance was that a change had taken place in the Parisian "ear" since the 1750's. Doubtless, if a performance was given as recently as two years ago, the scores of Rousseau's operettas still exist. They still exist by reputation to the number of four, entitled in chronological order *les Muses galantes*, *le Devin du village* (the largest of his public triumphs), *Pygmalion* (a "melodrama" without singing), and the fragmentary *Daphnis et Chloé* first brought to light after his death, as was the case with the other compositions—mostly songs—in a collection called *Consolations des misères de ma vie*. All these still exist. . . . but only in rare corners of the earth. So also does his *Dictionary of Music*, to which access is easier and perhaps more entertaining as well.

This compilation, which is as much a literary curiosity for its prejudices and its suppressions as Dr. Johnson's vocabulary of the English language, was written in odd moments through a period of about ten years, and its author considered it a sort of "*travail de manœuvre . . . qui n'avoit pour objet qu'un produit pécuniaire.*" It was finally published in Geneva in 1767 by Rousseau himself—eighteen years after the writing of his articles on Music for the Encyclopædia. Amusing as it is to read his strictures on the system and theories of his contemporary and rival Rameau in a long section under the heading *Dissonance*, in the course of which he concludes that "*tout intervalle commensurable est réellement consonant*"; instructive as it is to read his definition of the term *Fugue*, the tone of which may be reconstructed from a brief

quotation—"Since the pleasure which this type of composition gives is always mediocre, one may say that a fine fugue is the ungrateful masterpiece of a good harmonist":—it is, however not, in the *Dictionnaire* that any clear and orderly exposition of his musical æsthetic is to be sought. For clarity and for general statements it is necessary to read the *Lettre sur la musique française* that caused such scandal in the Académie and at the Opéra—institutions defined together in the dictionary of Rousseau as that official body in the French capital which made the loudest noise.

It is in this letter also that his affinities with "Mediterranean" music stand out, since it had for sole subject a damning comparison for French music—almost for French character—with certain examples of Italian opera buffa that had been performed for the first time at the national opera house. Prefatory remarks documented with example and comparison lead to the vigorous, merciless, and partly ridiculous conclusion: "I think I have shown that there is neither measure nor melody in French music, because the language is not capable of either; that French singing is only a continual barking . . . that its harmony is crude . . . that French tunes (*airs*) are not tunes at all; that French recitative is not recitative. Whence I conclude that the French have no music and can have none, or that if ever they do it will be so much the worse for them." His only kind word for the music of his native land is the negative and hazarded excuse that perhaps it was necessary for music to fall to such low estate "in order to accustom our ears insensibly to enjoy other tunes than those with which our nurses put us to sleep"—the "other tunes" being of course selected favorites from the Italian opera repertory of his time.

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Monsieur de Stendhal, in his early young manhood, had asked himself whether he should be a composer of operas, like Grétry, or a writer of plays, like any *faiseur de comédies*, with the natural result that he wrote neither operas nor plays—and to be sure like neither Grétry nor *faiseurs de comédies*. But his passion for music lasted the rest of his life, even though he never applied himself to the study of its theory or its practice. The reason for this seeming intellectual indifference was the same that explains why so many impassioned music students resign in despair from their labors when they find themselves beginning to lose that spontaneous passion through the prosaism and drudgery of application, the same that causes them to accept henceforth their fate of dilettanteism.

No less accusing an epithet can fall to Beyle when it is a question of describing his life-long connection with and enthusiasm for music.

The first of all his books—published originally in 1814 under still another pseudonym than that later adopted by him—was a collection of “lives” of Haydn, Mozart and Metastasio, the first two being further declared to be either closely modeled after or directly translated from works by the Italian Carpani and one M. Schlichtegroll. As a result of these “collaborations,” the remarks on works by the composers under discussion that delve respectively into the technical—as when, for example, the text calls “diminished sevenths” by the bad name that was still given them in 1809—are not, probably, Stendhal’s own. This appears all the more likely since his later book on Rossini, published in 1824 during the composer’s lifetime and five years before he had produced the opera by which his name is most glorified at the present day, is almost blameless in respect of any display of a knowledge of the elements of musical composition other than scales, trills, appoggiature, and kindred vocal embellishments. He appears never to have advanced farther in his appreciation of music than a very intense, but still very elementary, pleasure in florid homophony; and in one place he speaks out the decisive question and answer: “Did anybody ever begin playing a sonata all over again? Instruments scarcely touch the listener.” He quotes, for the information of his uneducated readers, Rousseau’s definition of the fugue, and he metes out praise to Haydn (or is it Carpani who praises?) in this manner: “When Beethoven and even Mozart himself piled up notes and ideas, when they looked for quantity and strangeness of modulations, their symphonies though learned and full of research produced no effect whatever; but when they followed in the footsteps of Haydn they touched every heart.” That effect was the single pragmatic criterion of æsthetic excellence by which he measured his musicians; and because Rossini’s early operas—which he had not heard when he wrote of Haydn as of the greatest of the great—pleased him or “touched his heart,” he concluded that Rossini was *più mosso* than the superlative.

The generalizations in his comments are far apart and few; but such as they show themselves in the surrounding mass of anecdotic details, they are almost entirely fluid, and devoid of the force of rule or law with which most generalizers attempt to invest their statements. The most general and the most inclusive is that in which he describes “*le grand but de tous les arts: ils font plaisir.*” Of music in particular he says: “There is nothing real

in music except the state in which it leaves the soul, and I will grant the moralists that this state powerfully disposes it to reverie and to the tender passions." . . . "Good music is only our own emotion. It seems that music gives us pleasure by placing our imagination in the necessity to feed momentarily on illusions of a certain kind. These illusions are not calm and sublime." . . . "Everything is uncertainty and imagination in music," for "nothing could be more capricious or more mobile than that which is pleasing." The consequence of all this uncertainty is then that "the pleasure is entirely in illusion, and the more solidly sensible a man is, the less is he susceptible to it."

Most of these astonishing observations have a psychological accuracy that even the less solidly reasonable of men who call themselves musicians can admire. From the standpoint of the "average man" or even of such an exceptional one as Henri Beyle, music is undoubtedly a means of suppressing boredom—a means of producing that terror of the dilettante's existence only when it takes itself too seriously, too learnedly. It is unlikely that there will ever be a completely logical and satisfying explanation of *why* mere combinations of sound are able to produce in certain men the sensation of being torn into halves of which one is carried by these "noises" entirely out of reach of the other and entirely disconnected from it for a time—for so long as the "illusion" lasts. Until such an explanation is offered by some psychologist of an entirely different genius from his predecessors, the random comments of Stendhal will remain immune from demolition even by the continued scorn of theorists and virtuosi. There is yet life in his practice of the old Socratic method as described by Aristophanes and quoted on the title-page of the *Vie de Rossini*: "*Laissez aller votre pensée comme cette insecte qu'on lache en l'air avec un fil à la patte.*"

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There is something decidedly akin to the June-bug simile in Nietzsche's style of expression, especially on the subject of music. And the subject of music to him invariably signified Wagner—as it did to almost every musician of his time and of times long afterward.

The *Case of Wagner* pamphlet remains to this day full of interesting and perhaps insoluble problems—biographic, psychological, ethical, æsthetic, the hardest of them all being the

disentanglement of the personal from the general, the psychological from the æsthetic: it would be too much to hope ever to distinguish finally between psychology and biography, between ethics and æsthetics in Nietzsche.

So far as it is possible to understand why he considered the hope of the music of the future to lie in Italian music—lending to the national adjective a sense loose enough to include the French Bizet and the German Peter Gast—and why he considered its doom to lie in Wagnerism: the reason was similar to Stendhal's reason for valuing Rossini above Mozart, similar to Rousseau's for valuing *opera buffa* above *opéra comique*—that they were gay, or that they were pleasing because they "touched the heart," or that they made the hearer wish to dance a dithyramb. Wherein his reason differed from the reasons of the other two was in a positively moral objection to Wagner's music: he avoided it far less because it required him after audition to soothe his intestines with "Giraudel's pastilles" than because it sickened some more elusive member with a trouble and a despair for which in the end he never found any complete remedy.

Musical criticism, when limited to this "physiological" plane to which he planned to reduce all æsthetics, is capable of a great deal more than it can possibly accomplish on the plane of ethical and moral application. Nietzsche's declarations of the physical effects, the sensations, of hearing not only *Carmen* and Gast's *Lion of Venice* but even parts of *Parsifal*, show him to have been susceptible to keener musical appreciations than the states of "revery and tenderness" that Stendhal valued. It was these very ecstasies that frightened the moralist in him: they seemed feverish and unhealthy emotions, and therefore to be avoided as harmful to the welfare of the race—of the generalized individual. Evidently this conclusion, true or false, has small connection with the physiology of art. It can make no difference in æsthetic appreciation whether humanity evolves to some splendid higher stage, or falls into the most abysmal decadence. Human heroism was never more sublime in Greek tragedy than in its terrible downfalls.

Nevertheless, it is impossible to ignore the wide circulation that has been granted in recent years to a certain anti-Wagnerism—for reasons similar to Nietzsche's or for other reasons quite innocent of theoretical preoccupations. The immediate counteraction among composers—Franck, Debussy, Ravel, none of whom could have been quite what he became without Wagner's precedence, whatever their ultimate differences—was more a result of the everlasting necessity of the successors of a reformer not to

follow blindly his shining example, than of an active opposition in musical principle. And if *Pelléas et Mélisande* is really the lone pathetic animal without hope of progeny that it has been claimed to be in the history of music, it is not without its younger companions in reaction. These have not necessarily taken operatic expression: the Wagnerian vein branches through all musical forms that are still in use; the Wagnerian "spirit" is adaptable to any conceivable form that might be revived or invented.

The philosophic import of any composer is open to endless dispute—and necessarily will remain so, since even philosophers can leave their writings open to contradictory interpretations. But Wagner took the pains to write in words what he considered the ideologic equivalent of his musical emotion, and for that reason it is not necessary to be so cautious in translating these "ninth-chords," these tremolos of stringed instruments, these massed brasses, into non-musical terms. This kind of translation had always been discouraged by composers until Wagner made it impossible for a generation of composers to write anything but programme music—Beethoven had made remarks about Fate knocking at the door only in rare and perhaps unguarded moments. But after Wagner, all European composers—even Russian composers, until the days of the "Five"—were guilty of committing that grave compromise of the musical unity of a work which Hartmann described in 1887 as "the most efficacious means of reviving complex sentiments already experienced or anticipating a future psychic moment." And it was the moral import, almost the social import, of the sentiments revived and anticipated by Wagner's music that Nietzsche found objectionable, on moral or social grounds.

How far the composers who are writing music to-day have gone from that musical attitude is only too evident: in the "architectonics" of Stravinsky's later researches, in the rhythmic Hispanicisms of De Falla, Satie's melodic and harmonic simplifications, Honegger's dynamics. It is almost as though it had been necessary, after so long an immersion in the associative aspect of tones and their combinations, to revert to an examination of the elements of musical composition to see what their inherent nature and possibilities might be. And whether the next formulation to a type of music of the future will follow this new classicism or not can have no more nullifying an effect upon the æsthetic longevity of the *Symphonies for Wind Instruments* or of *Socrate*, than the utter divorcement of these two works and their compeers from Wagnerism can have upon *Tristan*, or than that inexhaustible

marvel can have upon the artistic integrity of *Pelléas* or of *le Poème de l'Extase*.

It is nearly useless to inquire how near to the Mediterranean ideal the Wagnerian reaction of these younger composers has come, since the foremost figure of them all—foremost in variety of genius as in power—is in the purest Slavic tradition. For it seems rather more likely that Tristan's death-scene would have touched the heart of Henri Beyle, as in spite of all it touched Nietzsche's, than that he would have found pleasure in *Pacific 231*. If Stravinsky's operas are added to the repertoire of the Opéra before the end of this century, it is to be hoped that the ghost of Rousseau will occasionally stalk the scenes of his former triumphs and mortifications to see, after two hundred years, what is being offered to France instead of *Lakmé* and *Manon*.

VIEWS AND REVIEWS

By CARL ENGEL

IF occasionally this magazine turns up a little late, if it does not always strike the quarters with clock-like precision, I have been given to understand that the fault lies entirely with the procrastinating habits of the quarterly "cuckoo." The charge is serious; and what is worse, I must plead guilty. My only hope rests in your mercy, dear lenient Reader. But expect not too much contrition. Let me live in the pleasant if somewhat vain belief that you would rather have your *QUARTERLY* behind the hour with that punctuating bird note at the end, than get it promptly *without* it. Nevertheless, I am trying to mend my ways, spurred by the urgings of that stern and valued friend, the Editor. As a result of this endeavor to translate the good intention into a noble deed, I find myself in great distress.

When these lines appear in print, sensitive dwellers in apartment houses will have begun to harass the janitor with sharp requests for the first "steam"; and the more fortunate owner of a fire-place will be laying on a log or two as the evenings grow chillier with the fragrant dampness of Autumn. Those are the nights made for writing and reading. But here am I supposed to exercise what scant powers of discernment as a reviewer I may possess, while fate compels me to swelter in a stupor under the torrid August sun of Washington—when every self-respecting person even remotely connected with music has his picture in the musical journals, taken either at the foot of a ship's ladder in mid-Atlantic or at the head of a master-class by some cool Castalian well.

There surely never was a place or a time less fit for the pursuits of the scholiast than is our handsome capital at the height of Summer. Oppressiveness of the atmosphere engenders lethargy of the mind. Thoughts stick, the brain comes to a stand-still.

Not long ago some Labor members in the British parliament questioned the necessity of providing funds for the temporary removal of His Majesty's ambassadorial establishment from Washington to the coast of New England. Let these honourable and laborious gentlemen draw hither and learn. Even so, an Ambassador enjoys certain extraterritorial privileges for his relief and restoration—in cold weather as well as in warm—which do not

belong to a law-abiding, dried-up music librarian. All the more reason why the American Government should provide funds for the permanent removal of the whole city of Washington to a less debilitating clime. Or—well, for the alternative we must look to the next Congress and the referendum.

You will say that when it is hot it is so most everywhere. Quite true, and may it console the philosophically minded. But there are differences in degree; the qualifying (or disqualifying) adjective has a comparative as well as a superlative. And the latter indubitably is the distinctive attribute of Washington. Under such circumstances—only half grasped, I fear, when these pages come before your eyes in the month of the brown ale that used to be—it is impossible to write critical reviews of anything heavier than the lightest fiction. Yes, if I were to discuss with you, let us say, the amiable books of André Birabeau that I just finished—*Le Bébé Barbu*, *Le Voyage à l'Hombre*, *Le Parfum de la Femme Coupable*—excellent Summer reading, I assure you, and not to be disdained in Winter; but I should have the Editor gravely shake his head and tell me that I was “cuckoo” indeed.

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It needs no further word of explanation why I have lacked the courage to plunge into profound investigations of Gregorian rhythms or why I passed by, with a faint shudder, another compact little treatise on the music of the ancient Greeks. I have not even been able to bring myself to read one or the other of two new lives of one of my favorite composers, Couperin. (How I should love, this very minute, to hear Landowska play *Le Bavolet Flottant* and *Les Barricades Mystérieuses*!) There are a dozen or more books staring at me reproachfully for my neglect, books that will be so much more interesting in December, unless by that time other and still more interesting books have come to hand. It almost seemed as though I should have to beg off again, altogether, which would have been a terrible calamity. But there hurried to my rescue a little volume which greatly entertained me and which I want you to enjoy with me, if you have not already seen it. Its title is “Antheil and the Treatise on Harmony” (Paris, Three Mountains Press); its author is Mr. Ezra Pound, the well-known poet. I admit that the penetrating, the witty and gently ironic M. Birabeau is perhaps more amusing than is Mr. Pound, who only now and then is really funny, and more often is a bit bumptious. But all the same I found his *opusculum* good reading when the

thermometer "at the kiosk" on the shady side of Pennsylvania Avenue was crawling up to 105° and higher.

You have, of course, heard of Mr. George Antheil; and if you have not, let me tell you in Mr. Pound's own words that Mr. Antheil is "possibly the first American or American-born musician to be taken seriously." This is good news, although one could have wished for more assurance in Mr. Pound's conclusion. That "possibly" mars the sentence, as it does the verdict. Understatement is not Mr. Pound's habitual manner. He can be devastatingly emphatic.

Mr. Pound's provocative little book comprises four sections. The first is given over to his "Treatise on Harmony"; the second one deals more particularly with Mr. Antheil; the third contains "Notes for performers by William Atheling [*recte* E. P.] with marginalia emitted by George Antheil"; and "Varia"—half a dozen pages of left-overs—bring up the rear.

Mr. Antheil, we learn, was born on July 8, 1901, at Trenton, N. J. "Trenton makes, the World takes!" Could it be that the Trenton Chamber of Commerce is unaware of what the city's product is doing to Paris, France, and is about to do—in Mr. Pound's estimation—to the rest of the world? Mr. Antheil's parents are Poles; his name is German (it means share or portion, and in American, I am told, it should be pronounced so as to rhyme with peel and not with pile). Mr. Antheil writes American music which is neither like Brahms nor like Jazz; and sober judges count it to be better than both. So far, unfortunately, I have not heard a single note of it myself. Therefore I am still disposed to accept all that Mr. Pound has written of Mr. Antheil as the one composer living who is "writing music that couldn't have been written before."

However, for the sake of fairness and completeness I must report the opinion of at least one critic, M. Boris de Schloezer, who differs on that point with Mr. Pound. M. de Schloezer is generally one of the first to welcome the new or unusual; he can not be dismissed as a crabbed conservative. Proof of it is that when he reviewed Mr. Antheil's "Symphony" (conducted by Mr. Golschman in Paris) for the "Revue Musicale" he thought the composer had "something to say" and "knew his business," although neither the sayings nor the business had anything strikingly novel to commend them. In fact, contrary to Mr. Pound, M. de Schloezer detected in this score "not only reminiscences, but entire phrases" of music that had been written before, and explained it as a "disdain of originality deriving evidently from Strawinsky, whose shadow

hovers over the whole work." The symphony was followed by Mr. Antheil's ballet music for player pianos and sundry other mechanical contraptions, all manipulated by the composer in person. It is the music of levers, gears, transmitters, motors, batteries. As such it certainly is the music of our time, something that could not have been written before. But is its newness matched by its excellence? M. de Schloezer thinks not. To him this ballet music "spoiled completely the hopes which the symphony had raised." He saw in it merely a caricature of Stravinsky's "Noces." When critics of such eminence disagree, what is one to do? The public in Paris, with the exception of a few Antheilians led by Mr. Pound, lustily hooted and jeered. That used to be a sign of something worthwhile happening, and on the strength of it cautious critics were safe in proclaiming the rise of a great prophet in Israel. Such was still the case with Mr. Arnold Schoenberg, whose earlier compositions unloosed public riots, led to fist-fights and law-suits, but whose latest lucubrations are reverently and politely listened to by the *conoscenti* and the *innocenti* alike. Now M. de Schloezer throws doubt into our hearts by saying that "actuellement, le scandale n'est plus une preuve." The bottom drops out of musical criticism. What will our own arbiters of the press decree when Mr. Damrosch plays Mr. Antheil's music in New York this winter? Will they side with their *confrère*, M. de Schloezer, or with the poet, Mr. Pound?

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That this "revolutionary" music should be discovered, recognized, admired by a poet while musicians still reject or deride it, is in accordance with the best tradition. The ordinary musician's ears are dulled by iteration, clogged with prejudice, his eyes are riveted precisely on all that has "been written before." The poet Baudelaire acclaimed Wagner when the musicians, from Berlioz down, sniffed him with suspicion or growled at him angrily. The thing that could not have been done before, in art, is always suspected or denounced at first. Because it generally means the death of all the weak and ephemeral stuff that immediately precedes it. The craving for novelty is exceeded only by the fear of innovation. Novelty is King for the moment at least, while the next usurper is plotting dethronement or worse. Therefore the innovations in one art often find their first and loudest heralds in the followers of a sister art, since they have less to fear from it and so have a partially open mind. The poet stands to lose little by an

upheaval in music, but he can win much if the insurrection follows along the lines of his own previous revolt.

The case of Mr. Pound, ex-vorticist poet, is not, however, a perfect example of what I am trying to describe. Not because he falls short of the standard, but because he far surpasses it. Mr. Pound is a paragon of open-mindedness. Long a writer of polished verse, he has lately joined the ranks of composers. At least he "accommodates notes to words," as he himself puts it, outside of which he claims to be, in music, no more than "an incompetent amateur." Tush, tush! He recently had some of his compositions performed in Paris, settings of poems by François Villon. Poet and musician, he is Mr. Anthel's Baudelaire and Liszt.

But this does not exhaust the versatility of Mr. Pound; he is also a theorist. I should almost call him an academician. For he explains that "academicism is not excess of knowledge; it is the possession of *idées fixes* as to how one shall make use of one's data." Now no one would accuse Mr. Pound of being burdened with an excess of musical knowledge in spite of his apparent acquaintance, nay, his intimate familiarity with Raphael Socius, Giambattista Doni, Prosdocius de Beldemandis, Dom Bedos de Celles, Franco of Cologne, Marchetto of Padua, and Dolmetsch of Haslemere. Moreover, if Mr. Pound's data are not dancing a perpetual passacaglia over the *ostinato* of his *idées fixes* (including Mr. Anthel), then our whirling world had better revise its concepts of fixed stars and suns (including Mr. Anthel).

Of Mr. Anthel, the rising luminary of a new day in music, we shall not be able to judge until his rays have travelled westward to our hemisphere. Mr. Pound, the theorist and academician, precedes him like the roseate cloud of dawn. And for the moment at least, upon his cloudy doctrines we can train our marvelling gaze.

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The first thing Mr. Pound's little book sets out to show is that, from Aristoxenos to Schoenberg, no treatise on harmony has laid proper stress or has so much as touched on "the element of Time." There appears to be necessary "a time-interval" which must elapse between one sound and another "if the two sounds are to produce a pleasing consonance or an interesting relation." Instantly our curiosity is pricked, we sit attentive to learn at last what constitutes a pleasing consonance, what forms an interesting relation. But we are bilked again. Instead, Mr. Pound promulgates his

basic axiom (set in all caps.), to wit, that "a sound of any pitch, or any combination of such sounds, may be followed by a sound of any other pitch, or any combination of such sounds, providing the time-interval between them is properly gauged; and this is true for any series of sounds, chords, or arpeggios."

You could not ask for a clearer, terser definition of this hitherto "grossly omitted" element. Nor can you fail to note that, in spite of the new liberties granted, there is still a wholesome restraint suggested in the proviso about those "properly-gauged" time-intervals. The restraint goes farther. Even Mr. Pound's system has limits, physical if not æsthetic ones. He points them out presently: "The limits for the practical purposes of music depend solely on our capacity to produce a sound that will last long enough, i.e., remain audible long enough for the succeeding sound or sounds to catch up, traverse, intersect it."

All this is not nearly so revolutionary as the cover *couleur de Moscou* of Mr. Pound's little book would lead one to expect. Here emerge cheerfully our tried old friends, the chords and arpeggios, the pleasing consonances and interesting relations; why, even practical purposes are dragged out again to put us at ease and make us feel at home. How much more daring was Dr. Burney, music's first transcontinental reporter and interviewer, who already in 1770 foresaw a legitimate place in music for noise. It took a century and a half to fulfill his prediction. Let me hastily add that whatever Mr. Pound's "new paths" may be, they lie not in the direction of mere noise. In fact, he shrinks with ill concealed disdain from poor, deluded Marinetti and his "dead cats in a foghorn."

Sensitive poet that he is, Mr. Pound has given much thought to rhythm. He illumines the subject occasionally with a bright flash that soars like a sky-rocket and leaves its image on the retina long after darkness has returned. Take this for instance: "The verbal rhythm is monolinear. It can form contrapunto only against its own echo, or against a developed expectancy." That is splendid—keenly observed, brilliantly expressed, and absolutely true. It applies to prose as well as poetry. And the "developed expectancy" is typical of music. Almost the entire art of musical composition consists of knowing how to develop this expectancy, when to gratify it and when to surpass it with something beyond expectation. What we call "æsthetic pleasure" is largely contained in the relish of a proper balance between the two.

On the whole, however, Mr. Pound's observations on rhythm are neat and sensible rather than original. He believes in an absolute rhythm. So did Heraklitos. So do most of us, for that

matter. But what the secret is of a flowing line of verse, or a felicitous prose cadence, Mr. Pound does not pretend to divulge, any more than he can probably tell us why in music a heavenly asthma (take the accompaniment of Bach's "Golgotha") can be as beautiful as a long melodic phrase coiling up and down on a big chest full of wind.

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When Mr. Pound waxes eloquent on frequencies and combined frequencies of notes, he recalls the dreariest of text-books, without always attaining to the soundness that the best of them possess. And as regards his dictum that "the time element affects harmony," it belongs to the genus *castanea*, or chestnut. I well remember an experience of my own, twenty years ago—oh! for those irretrievable time-intervals—when I showed a piece of music to a man for whose critical ear I have always had the highest regard. In dissecting a certain progression and trying to analyze what was wrong with it, he finally pointed to one note and said: "I hear that note entering one-eighth too soon." That was all. The progression was corrected, it was good. I had learned something, and it was nothing but the harmonic significance of Mr. Pound's "time-element." But, alas, to gauge it there is nothing, nothing but an ear, a sharp, rinsed, unbuttoned ear. Or the superhuman imaginative concentration, helped by "remembered analogies," of that deaf crank, Beethoven.

Here is a question Mr. Pound must have addressed expressly to me: "Why, *mon contradicteur* [!], have masters of music specified that certain compositions be played at a certain speed?" I bow and reply: to have the directions disregarded by performers—when these know better. For as there is absolute rhythm, there is specific time. One is born of the other. And there are cases on record when even masters of music have for some reason or other failed to indicate that specific time correctly. But in most instances a musical (and rhythmic) person will sense the time unmistakably, just as a sensitive individual, in walking with someone else, will know whether the pace is too fast or too slow to suit the other walker and the purpose of the walk.

Mr. Pound does not miss the opportunity of reminding us that he had a prominent part in drafting the "Vorticist Manifestoes" and in the activities of the "movement" whose short but promising existence was rudely ended in August, 1914, when our globe was engulfed in a mightier eddy, compared with which the noise that

the "Vorticists" made was as the swish of the receding waters in a bathtub. *Bon dieu, qu'il y a longtemps de tout ça!* If I feel like Methuselah, it is not because of my forty-three years (most of them wasted), but because I can look back upon distant vistas of "movements," one following the other like Egyptian dynasties.

With the war came hysteria. Other pathological states, already latent, were developed by it. They affected the arts. "Dadaism" and "Maschinenkunst" may seem to-day remoter than the reign of Thothmes. But the younger artists would all be machinists, engineers.

The constructing engineer is the great dare-devil of the day. He leads. His science and his craft accomplish wonders. If nature has any laws left inviolate, he will break them and establish laws of his own. In the revolt against "what has been done before" he offers daily new samples of unparalleled achievement. He has evolved, or is evolving, incidentally a new order of beauty, too strange yet to be comprehended in all its potentialities. Time will tell how and to what extent they can serve the needs of sculptor, painter, or musician.

"Mechanisms," geometry, and mathematics all have certain well-known relations to art, and probably a few more which are not yet quite understood. But recurrently the idea of this interdependence gets hold of a people like an obsession. The simple truth is seen in manic distortion. Mr. Pound has hit upon such truth when he defines music as "a composition of frequencies." But like so many other and similar definitions it tells only half the story. Anything that is mathematically ascertainable can also be reduced to formulas, can be communicated and taught. Mr. Pound thinks that if he can only get "the mathematics of these relations so complicated that composers will become discouraged, give up trying to compose by half-remembered rules, and really listen to sound," he will have performed no inconsiderable service to music.

The composer of genius does not work by rules, not even half-remembered ones. He depends largely upon expedients, and these he must find for himself. Half the time he stumbles upon these expedients by chance, or guided by a kindly demon. The expedients crystallize into devices. If the gods are merciful, they let the composer die young before the devices turn into petrified mannerisms. Should the expedients and devices land the composer anywhere, the whole *confrérie* will fall upon them like a pack of hungry wolves, and the theorists, *post factum*, will raise them to the dignity of rules. Then we are treated to a lot of what the

Germans call *Epigonenmusik*, which might be translated as "yesterday's hash warmed over."

Parenthetically: there are dishes that taste better the second day than they did the first, provided a little culinary ingenuity enters into their preparation. They are not the *grands plats*. But they represent that delectable class of potted venison, fowl in aspic, or spicy ragouts. Man does not live by roast-beef alone, nor by Bach, Shakespeare, or Michelangelo.

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The radical tendencies of Mr. Pound are most sharply defined in the criticisms which he signed "William Atheling" and contributed to the "New Age," from 1917-1920. The chief reason for reprinting them in the third part of Mr. Pound's book is the fact that now they come to us enhanced with the pat and tart glosses of the young Trentonian who pays them canine compliments and sprinkles over them the running commentary of his marginalia. The whole encounter is true to the life in its mixture of becoming gravity and charming *sans gêne*.

Art criticism seldom gets beyond a critic's tussle with his own likes and dislikes. Mr. Pound proves a nimble wrestler. Under the weight of heavy argument he pins to the carpet many veteran delusions commonly called "æsthetic creeds." And while he keeps them in a controversial strangle-hold, worthy of Zbisko the Great, umpire Antheil nods approval.

Mr. Pound dislikes the piano—or at least he did so in February, 1918, which was several years before Mr. Antheil discovered new possibilities in the super-dreadnaught (or dreadful) player-piano which is to the gentle clavichord what the Gattling-gun is to the cross-bow. Mr. Pound's dislike, of 1918, for the piano is even to-day shared by many. But in slapping the instrument and making it responsible for the introduction of the tempered scale, he really hits at the pianists when in his brisk, epigrammatic style he avers that "all keyboard instruments tend to make performers of people not born to be musicians." Evidently Mr. Pound does not own stock in a piano factory, otherwise he would not imply the ruinous suggestion that the output of the world's piano manufacturers should be limited to the number of born musicians.

Leaving aside the question of keyboard *versus* fingerboard, does Mr. Pound intend to overlook the enormous debt which occidental music owes to the tempered scale? Probably he would deny that it is a debt, and stamp it a curse. Mr. Pound believes

in "absolute pitch." At least he has some more or less vague ideas as to the salvation of music depending on it. That brings him into sharp opposition to Prof. Carl Stumpf and Dr. Erich von Hornbostel. The latter, with the caution characteristic of the scientist, once wrote that "absolute pitch in music is (well-nigh) irrelevant." Be that as it will, without the tempered scale, coming when it did, we should not have had Bach's "48" and its descendants. The tempered scale gave into the musician's hands the pass-key of enharmonic modulation. It was a marvellous expedient and became a dangerous device. Schubert handled it with the skill of a light-fingered Raffles. Wagner twisted off the bow and left the bit in the lock.

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Undoubtedly there is too little regard for beauty of tone, the essentially sensuous and therefore essentially artistic quality of music. Mr. Pound tries to make matters appear worse than they are by contrasting the bad enough present with a past which only in his imagination acquires the virtues that he ascribes to it. He writes: "The attention that was centered in earlier music upon purity of tone, upon sound quality, has been weakened and weakened till I have seen a composer of no small talent utterly impervious to the quality of noise he was making." (To which "G. A." feelingly and illuminatingly adds: "I presume the 'timbre' is meant.")

Here is one of those pleasant and convenient myths which all critics invent at all times. Just what does Mr. Pound mean by the loose term "earlier music" and just how or where was the attention "centered" that produced in a fabled past something which is no longer ours? We have ear-witnesses who tell a different story. If Rousseau, Burney, *e tutti quanti*, are too late for Mr. Pound, we might find him "earlier" ones. Impervious or sound-proof composers—and performers—have probably existed in every age, including the so-called golden one.

It was all right for Mr. Pound to write in 1918: "A concert in a concert-hall is a performance, a presentation, not an appeal to the sympathies of the audience." (He is justly indignant at the "interpreter" who obtrudes himself.) But see how much this simple statement gains in 1925 when appended to it we find a forceful "Yes. A. G." Mr. Anthel is not always so laconic. Nor is he shy in brandishing about with names. For example, Mr. Pound writes: "An era of bad taste probably gathers to itself

inferior matter from preceding periods. An indiscriminate rummaging in the past does not help to form a tradition." Whereupon Mr. Antheil jumps for joy and "emits" approvingly: "A splendid turn for Mr. Casella, Malipiero, Prokofieff, and the Six." Mr. Pound's assertion that "a sense of rhythm covers many defects" draws from G. A.: "One might say almost all." Does the glossarist here speak *pro domo*?

When Mr. Pound complains that "there is no place or company where any number of writers and musicians meet to try new experiments of an 'unpractical nature,'" we must remember that this was written in 1919. In 1926 conditions are changed. Rather an absolute reversal has set in. Places and companies abound where a specialty is made of experiments in music of an "unpractical nature." They have become fashionable, hence lucrative affairs.

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So one could go on, here picking a flower, there pricking a bubble in William Atheling's Notes for Performers. His own performance is not the least entertaining part of Mr. Pound's book. Moreover, the manner in which it is presented offers food for thought and invites imitation. Considering the success of the Pound-Antheil alliance, it would be an excellent scheme for each musical critic to issue his complete works with marginal notes "emitted" by some suitable and kindred commentator. Thus I should like to see the annotated articles of Mr. Newman, M. Mar-nold, Sig. Gatti, Hr. Bekker, of our own Gilman, Rosenfeld and Hale, gathered and edited as "The World's Library of Musical Hermeneutics." But the great question is: which critic and composer should be paired? The problem is too knotty, too involved to admit of a ready solution, especially in a state of estival somnolence while "the adventurous sun took heaven by storm." Therefore let us wait until bracing October comes, when this number leaves the press, and then make the question the subject of one of those "contests" now so popular. A properly instituted prize-jury will decide which set of suggested pairs shall carry off the trophy: a life-subscription to THE MUSICAL QUARTERLY.

Who said "cuckoo"?

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